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HERBERT
PUTNAM

1861-1955

A Memorial Tribute

HERBERT PUTNAM



*Herbert Putnam. Bust in bronze (1939) by
his daughter, Brenda Putnam, N.A.
Photograph by Laura Gilpin.*

Herbert Putnam

1861-1955

A M E M O R I A L T R I B U T E



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Foreword

HERBERT PUTNAM—Librarian of Congress from April 5, 1899, to October 1, 1939, when he became Librarian Emeritus, a post he held until his death on August 14, 1955—would modestly have declined to have a volume dedicated to his memory. Indeed, none is needed.

His spirit is animate in the granite and marble buildings over which he presided and his memory lives in the surpassing collections and vital services he brought into being. So long as they remain, they will reflect his vision; his achievement will abide in them. This volume, published on the fifty-seventh anniversary of Dr. Putnam's taking the oath of office as Librarian of Congress, can only suggest the scope of his accomplishment.

Many of us would have liked the honor of paying tribute to the eighth Librarian of Congress, but we would have been merely borrowers from David C. Mearns, Library chronicler and biographer of Dr. Putnam. His perceiving mind and eloquent pen speak for all of us at the Library.

In presenting this tribute to Dr. Putnam we are mindful of his words, that "against the achievement itself portraiture seems . . . irrelevant." But we know also that it must be said of him, as he said of his associates, that to have dwelt with him "is to be citizen of no mean city."

L. QUINCY MUMFORD
Librarian of Congress

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Herbert Putnam and his Responsible Eye

A Memorial Tribute

THIS COMPANY, it may be presumed, is come together to honor an American who, anonymously and invisibly, but never impersonally or unconsciously, profoundly enriched the intellectual estate of his countrymen. But in another, more intimate, perhaps parochial, sense this gathering may represent the acceptance of an invitation issued more than half a century ago:

"The Librarian will at any season and with or without special appointment, be glad to see any member of the force who desires to confer with him: whether the matter concern his status or prospects, or the duties or privileges or comforts of the service, or be purely personal. He has from time to time expressed this.

"During the next several weeks he would be particularly glad to see any such of his associates between 2:30 and 3:30 and 4:30 and five o'clock of any afternoon (including Sundays) when the Library is open." (1)*

In that event, you come too late, and upon Herbert Putnam's remembrancer, still under the influence of that austere temperament, there rests a stern injunction to attain fitness. His spirit forbids careless rhetoric, mournful

*Italic figures in parentheses refer to Notes and References, p. 49-52.

sentiment, excessive praise. "No man," he once told the staff, "no man can affect modesty who deems himself competent to be your chief" (2); but contrast this statement with the words written in a letter long ago to the publisher of a biographical dictionary:

"Without venturing to criticise any principle adopted for the Cyclopedia, I may suggest that as a possible user of the Cyclopedia, I should find more serviceable specific information than eulogy in general terms.

"In accordance with your further request, I enclose a copy of my photograph, which, although somewhat soiled, will doubtless serve your purpose" (3).

Yes, Herbert Putnam would insist that *his* memorial be composed of "specific information"; he had no *little* vanities, no use for unreckoned, unreasoned, praises. He had no need of them. This much by way of introduction.

An appraisal of the Putnam legacy must begin with two characteristics of it borne clearly, constantly in mind. The first is this: The Library of Congress, as it exists today, is in its outward seeming the Library as he left it. True, in the interval, the administrative structure has sustained some innovation; the collections have grown apace; strange figures bend over the desks and walk along the corridors. But the services and their purpose; the duties that animate the institution; the direction of its progress: these remain substantially the same.

The second characteristic is of comparable significance: When Herbert Putnam took the oath of office on that April morning of 1899, and mailed the attestation to the Secretary of State (4), he was already a professional, experienced in the executive practices of his calling, recommended for new exertions by his colleagues throughout the land, and appointed on the basis of a firmly established reputation for distinguished capacities. He believed, as he said, "in library work as a useful division of public service" (5), and succinctly enumerated his previous career in these terms:

Librarian, Minneapolis (Minn.) Athenaeum; 1884-1887.
Librarian, Minneapolis (Minn.) Public Library; 1887-1891.

Librarian, Boston (Mass.) Public Library; 1895-1899.
President, Mass. Library Club; '96-'97.

President, American Library Association, '98; filling out the term of Justin Winsor.

Delegate (representing the United States) at the International Library Conference held at London; 1897.

Has written no monographs, but is the author of various articles in magazines, periodicals and in professional journals (6).

But if the measure of Herbert Putnam's achievement as Librarian of Congress is to be taken, it is necessary to understand the conditions prevailing when first he "viewed them with a responsible eye" (7), and to record his impressions, insofar as may be possible, in his own words. The main "building stood as planned: the outside quadrangle, the octagonal reading room centered within it, and the three main book stacks radiating from it—north, east and south—to the quadrangle itself" (8). It had been opened for more than a year and, perhaps, some of its more lamentable features had been detected. Generally speaking, Herbert Putnam considered it "a poor economy to build your building first and select afterwards the man who will have to operate it." It were "better to pay him a full salary for a couple of years for doing nothing more than observing, investigating and preparing to give advice than to put him in only when the machine has been constructed" (9). In the case of Mr. Putnam himself that had been impossible. But to a member of the House Committee on Appropriations he once privately confided:

"The *present* expenditure is a large one. It is in my opinion larger than the present service justifies. Until the Library of Congress be equipped for really efficient service to Congress on the one hand, and to scholarship at large

on the other, it is little more than a reference library for the District of Columbia.

"I do not see how Congress is justified in spending \$300,000 a year in maintaining a reference library for the District of Columbia. Nor does such a library justify a seven million dollar plant" (10).

The situation was altogether deplorable. Mr. Putnam was emphatic when, on January 26, 1900, he described the Library of Congress as "a mass of material not yet equipped with the official records which are requisite for its safety, or with the catalogues and other paraphernalia which are necessary for its effective use" (11).

Small wonder that he, a little ruefully, had expressed to a journalist on the *New York Tribune* a "hope that the profession and the public generally, while anticipating much in the future, will be content to see the much emerge slowly. I doubt if anything would appear above the surface for a long time to come" (12). Or that, in a different mood, he had complained to R. R. Bowker: "We have plenty of authority; all that we need is the money" (13). The absence of apparatus caused him grave misgivings; it was difficult to dramatize the implications. And then something happened that played into his hands. A Washington paper for Sunday, March 25, 1900, announced that "A number of rare and costly books forming a part of one of the most valuable collections of the Congressional Library, were stolen on Thursday night from the Library reading room." The report went on to say that "thefts of books are becoming more and more frequent, and . . . hardly a week passes without several volumes being stolen" (14).

Mr. Putman made the most of it. Early the next day he dispatched what was, for him, an unusually long letter to the Members of the Joint Committee on the Library:

"It is not my practice to attempt in the Press corrections of misstatements or exaggerations. Where, however, the subject matter is one necessarily of concern to Congress, it

is only proper that the Committee on the Library should have in its possession the exact information. I, therefore, communicate to the Committee that information in the present instance:—

“*One* book has apparently been stolen from the Library. It was issued to a reader on Thursday evening. It was not a book of extreme rarity, but it has sold for as much as \$55. I know of no other recent theft. It is the first one reported to me since I took office. I know of no justification of the statement that there has been a series of thefts since the Library moved into the new building.

“Every library suffers from occasional theft, and the Library of Congress cannot hope to be entirely an exception,—nor has it been in times past; though its chief losses have been from employees. Under present conditions, however, it is peculiarly liable to loss, from several causes avoided elsewhere:

“(1) There is no ‘*shelf-list*’ of the Library. This is the record customarily kept of the books as they stand on the shelves. Lacking this record it is impossible to check up the contents of any particular shelf and ascertain promptly whether any books be ‘missing.’

“(2) There is no *subject catalogue* of the printed books. Yet the large part of the applications are for the ‘best books’ on this or that subject. The attendants may suggest from their own memory, but are frequently obliged to supplement this by an examination of the shelves, where the books are roughly grouped by subject. In consequence some of them are constantly absent from their posts in the Reading Room.

“(3) There is at present no provision by which rare books may be examined under special supervision. There is no special room; there is no force of special attendants. A book of extremest rarity would now be examined only in the Librarian’s office. But this is an administrative office. The arrangement has inconveniencies by day; and the office is closed in the evening. In the evening the only room open for readers is the main rotunda. This is used by the general public. It is in constant movement, from scores

of readers entering and leaving. The attendants are busied with hundreds of demands, absorbing and distracting them. A single reader can be differentiated from the rest only by assigning him a particularly prominent desk;—a single book, only by noting the issue in a special record. Both these precautions were taken in the present instance: both failed,—as they are likely to fail when the special reader is only one of a group of special readers, and the attendants as a whole are busied with other routine, and no single attendant can be detailed to watch a single reader, even if under suspicion.

“Under the circumstances the book of extremest rarity would not be issued—nor is it. Such books are for the most part in locked cases in the exhibit hall or in safes elsewhere. But the book stolen was an ordinary printed book, whose high value is not intrinsic but due to its rarity. It was Haywood’s ‘History of Tennessee.’ It was not a merely curious book. It was a *useful* book, which could not well be refused to a reader. It was not on the open shelves, nevertheless. It was kept in a locked room. But this room had no special attendant, to supervise its use there; and the book was sent for and issued in the main reading room—under the special precautions, which, however, proved insufficient.

“(4) The Reading Room has not its full complement of attendants, even for the ordinary service. The exigency of work in other divisions of the Library—particularly in the Copyright Office—has necessitated the detail to them from the Reading Room force of over a dozen persons. With the force thus depleted it is not possible to cope properly with the routine demands,—still less to arrange for special supervision of special use.

“Owing to a similar defect the four existing divisions of the Library handling special material—the Manuscript, Map, Music, and Print Divisions—are closed at four o’clock. Yet the demand for the material they contain by no means terminates at this hour. They should be open until ten. Until this be done, and until, in addition, provision be made for the accommodation of the ‘special collec-

tions' in a special room, where their use by the proper persons may be specially facilitated and yet specially guarded, the Library cannot be said to be affording adequate service to the public; nor taking adequate precautions for its own safety.

* * *

"As I have explained in connection with my Estimates, the shelf list of a library is the stock book. Without it no inventory can be taken. Without an inventory it is impossible at any one time to state positively what books, if any, are 'missing.' The statement that but one book has recently been stolen must, therefore, be qualified as I have qualified it above:—but one book has recently been stolen to my knowledge. The conditions which force the administration of the Library to this qualification,—the absence of the proper records which would enable such statements to be unqualified, has been and is a source of anxiety and constant apprehension. The apprehension of loss and of the mortification of an inability to state positively whether or not there has been loss, will not abate until the Library be equipped with those records and receive its proper complement of attendants; in other words, until the work which my Estimates propose shall be begun next year, shall have been completed" (15).

Herbert Putnam, a man of confident patience, would have to wait nearly three decades for his rare book room; but, on the whole, the immediate results of the *affaire* were not too (shall we say?) unsatisfactory. A lesson in first principles was vividly imparted. The erroneous news story was corrected (16). Acting upon the theory "that this was only one of the cases frequently occurring in a library where a book missing and actually taken away without leave has, nevertheless, been taken without particular criminal intent," Haywood's *Tennessee* was recovered in a matter of hours (17). And what was infinitely more to the point, the Library was voted substantially the total of the funds requested in the Estimates. The or-

ganization (or, better, perhaps in the case of a century-old institution, the reorganization) of the Library could be effected.

Outwardly, Mr. Putnam was unmoved. Impassively suppressing an impulse to gloat, he admonished Helen E. Haines, editor of the *Library Journal*:

"There is one suggestion, or rather caution, perhaps, that you will let me make with regard to your editorial reference (if you make one) on the appropriation granted. The Committee granted what they did because as compared with the work to be done, my estimate seemed to them reasonable.

"Now, it would not do to be enthusiastic as to the amount of the Appropriation, as if it were a matter of surprise. The Committee must not be made to feel that they have been lavish. They have only done what an expert would say, I think, was necessary; but they have done no more, and ought not to be made to feel that they have done more, for it is their duty not to be lavish. So that the gratification should not be that Congress has been generous to the Library, but only that Congress has been able to take an intelligent view of the real needs, and to grant what was reasonable and necessary to meet them" (18).

For the ancient in these purlieus, reading those lines evokes the image of a little, red-headed man, in a high-backed chair, pipe in mouth, feet on hassock, brows arched, brown eyes flashing, mustachios bristling, and hands—those graceful, sophisticate, constantly moving hands—waving as he dictates to his secretary, Allen Boyd, whom he had engaged with the "understanding" that the employment is "absolutely to terminate" in three months "*unless* a new arrangement be made for its continuance" (19). (It was. It lasted for nearly forty years.)

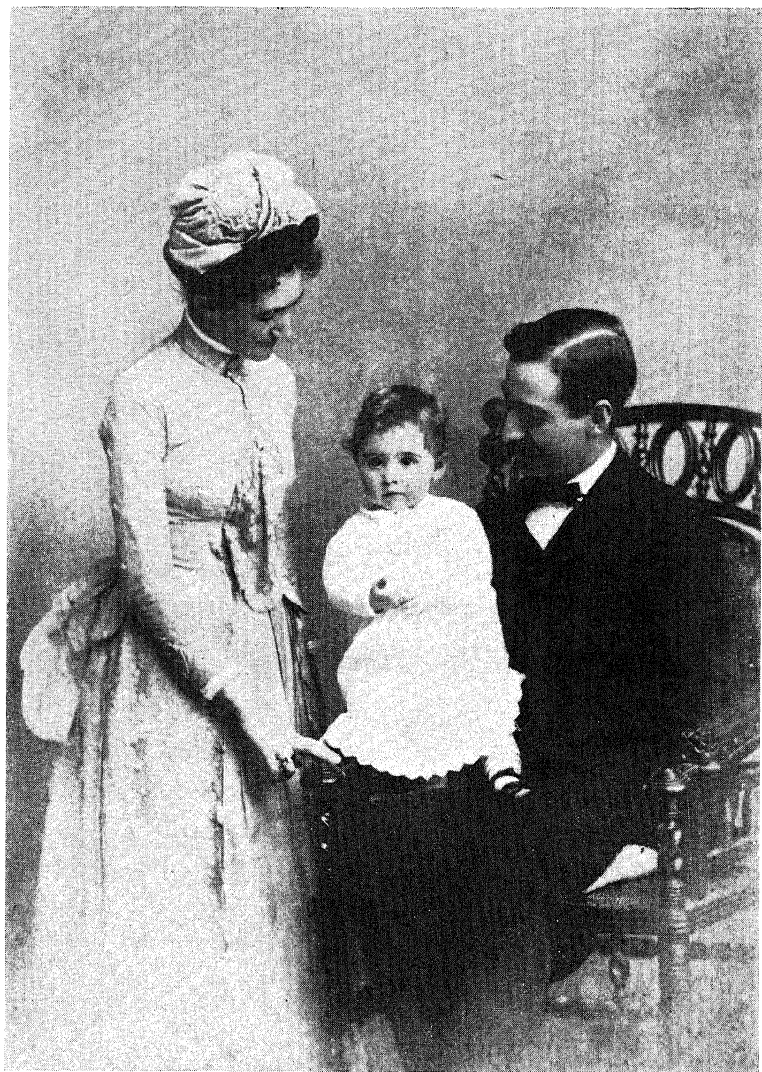
The Library's classification, as he found it, did not favorably impress Mr. Putnam. It had been designed by the first Baron Verulam and Viscount St. Albans, adapted



Herbert Putnam captioned this photograph: "Aetat 6 (before a mirror). 'Plain but interesting'" —a characterization of himself he had overheard his elders make.



Herbert Putnam, about 1883, when he was graduated from Harvard.



Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Putnam and their daughter Shirley, 1888.



*Herbert Putnam as librarian of the Boston Public Library, about 1896,
in uniform.*

by Thomas Jefferson, and modified by Ainsworth Spofford. It seemed to lack the exactness, the precision, required by the modern world. He determined to replace it. Accordingly, with this in view, he addressed an enquiry to the ingenious Melvil Dewey:

"I have heard it said that you were engaged upon a revision of the Decimal Classification. Is this true? If so, when will the revision, or any part of it be ready for use?

"I ask not from any mere abstract interest, but because we are about to reclassify. If by any possibility I can justify the use of D.C. I shall prefer to use it. In its present form, the arguments against its use in this Library seem insuperable. Our work of reclassification will, however, extend over several years, and it may be that your revision will proceed fast enough to keep pace with us.

"You can understand one obvious necessity in the case of this Library: the disproportionate provision for Americana.

"I understand that while you have not patented the Classification, you stipulate against its use in part; or rather, the assignment of any part of the notation to classes or sub-classes varying from those for which it stands in your scheme. Would you feel stringent about this stipulation in case we should find it possible to use here the notation in the main, but should find it impracticable to use it precisely in some of the sub-divisions?" (20)

But after months of intensive study, Mr. Putnam reached the reluctant conclusion that "we cannot use, without modification, any one [scheme] now in the field, and to modify may be less satisfactory than to devise newly for ourselves" (21). He determined to "devise newly" and from that decision there emerged the classification "which has since been recognised as the best for a large library" (22).

In the first stages of his Librarianship of Congress, Herbert Putnam more than once was obliged to resist the importunities for special consideration from leaders of

causes. Thus, for example, he was constrained to write to Susan B. Anthony: "The suggestion for an alcove 'devoted especially to books and works on the Woman Question' is one that I can at present only acknowledge the receipt of; with the supposition, however, that this, with other suggestions with reference to the disposition of space and material in the Library, will be taken up for consideration when the present general needs shall have been dealt with" (23).

But he was "glad" to learn, as he told George E. MacLean, of the University of Nebraska, "that I can depend upon the interest of the University Presidents to aid in undertakings momentous to the future of this Institution; and when occasion arises, as it undoubtedly will, I shall not scruple to aid [*sic, i. e. avail*] myself of the aid which you proffer" (24).

With Congress, Columbia's Nicholas Murray Butler gave formidable support to Mr. Putnam's appeal for a Division of Documents:

"There should [he declared] be available for consultation and study, a full set of all the government publications and public documents of all civilized nations. At present there is no such collection available, nor is there any printed guide or catalogue of such documents. I need not enlarge to you upon the great importance not only to members of Congress but to students of public law, of history, of economics, of having such a collection complete and available. I was delighted to find that the Librarian has included in his estimates for next year, a proposal which would enable him to carry out this important line of policy, and I beg to urge upon you most earnestly the wisdom of agreeing to his suggestion" (25).

Ohio State University's President, James H. Canfield, on the eve of his abandoning education in favor of librarianship, June 9, 1899, marked "private" a half-apologetic letter to Mr. Putnam:

"I presume there is no question as to your receiving all manner of advice from all sorts of cranks covering everything that you have yourself thought of and found feasible, and much that nobody ever ought to think of at all. I want to add my quota to either one or the other of these classifications.

"It has long seemed both desirable and possible to have all books deposited at the Congressional Library carefully catalogued on most approved methods by expert cataloguers—and cards printed in quantities sufficient to supply the various libraries of the country. In other words—the great bulk of card cataloguing could be done in a more satisfactory way and a more complete way, if it were done at one point: and that point, naturally, is the Congressional Library. . . .

"Having made the suggestion—or having stated my point, I leave the matter with you" (26).

It is unlikely that Herbert Putnam was struck by the novelty of Dr. Canfield's idea; it is more probable that he knew then, as he certainly knew shortly thereafter, that

"It was suggested a half century ago by the Federal Government through the Smithsonian Institution. Professor [Charles Coffin] Jewett's proposal then was a central bureau to compile, print and distribute cards which might serve to local libraries as a catalog of their own collections" (27).

But clearly, Mr. Putnam felt that the time had come to do something about it. In replying to Dr. Canfield, he wrote:

"So far from regarding your suggestion as in any way or manner eccentric I should consider the project proposed essentially within the proper function of this Library. Since July 1st 1898 fifty copies have been printed of each author card representing an accession by copyright. This number represents, of course, no greater multiplication

than may be necessary for our own catalogues, including reserves. But if fifty card copies can be printed there is no reason why five hundred should not be, and I see no reason why these additional copies should not be made available to other libraries at a cost which will cover actual outlay.

"The cards being used for the recent accessions are of the standard LB postal size, a departure from that in our old catalogue and one step further in the direction of cooperative service.

"The Library of Congress should be undertaking such a service on a large scale. It can do so adequately and conveniently only with a printing plant of its own. At present delays in the Government Printing Office cause an uncertainty as to the receipt of cards which would defeat any project which involves a dependence on us of other libraries"(28).

By the following Spring, Herbert Putnam was corresponding with the Public Printer concerning the establishment of a Branch Printing Office and a Branch Bindery in the Library of Congress (29). But it was not until October 15, 1901, following his return to his office after an absence of several weeks, that he made an interesting disclosure to a reporter of *The Evening Star*:

"The trip that I have just taken," said Mr. Putnam, "was primarily to attend in behalf of the library conferences of certain state library associations. I attended one of the association of New York state, held at Lake Placid; one of the association of Ohio, held at Sandusky, and one of the association of Iowa, held at Burlington. I attended also a meeting representing the library interests of Chicago and vicinity, and incidentally visited the University of Illinois, at Champaign, where there is the largest school for library training west of Philadelphia, and one of the largest and most efficient in the United States. There is an association representing the library interests of the country as a whole. That is the American Library

Association. That holds an annual meeting. It was this year at Waukesha, Wis. This has not proved sufficient to provide for all the necessary discussions of problems in library economy and practical projects in library work, especially cooperative work, so that associations have been formed in each of many states, and even within these in each of several of the largest cities."

He expatiated on the theme for several minutes, and then explained:

"At each meeting there are always some projects under consideration for cooperation among libraries as a whole in processes of cataloging, etc., and for the promotion of greater efficiency in the effort to advance the higher research. It is to these particularly that the Library of Congress owes a duty and in these it must necessarily be interested. It has the largest collection of books in the western hemisphere, increasing more rapidly than any other single collection; it is organizing within its walls bibliographic apparatus and an expert bibliographic service of high efficiency; it has an opportunity absolutely unique to render its bibliographic work of general utility. I say absolutely unique because it receives without any cost to itself every book entered under the copyright law and a large mass of other material through exchange and the exchanges of the Smithsonian Institution and a very large amount of material through deliberate purchase. It has now a corps of cataloguers who are experts, who are engaged in classifying and cataloguing this material and in reclassifying and cataloguing the material on hand. It has within its walls a printing office, a branch of the government printing office, to print the product of this work. These products can be multiplied in such a way as to be available to other libraries at a cost which is only the cost of the least cost factors; for instance, in the case of catalogue cards, the additional stock and the presswork. Libraries securing the benefit of this work through the additional copies will, of course, reimburse to the government the expense of pro-

ducing them, but the expense will be but a small fraction of the far greater expense which they have been incurring in an attempt to do the whole work individually.

"As among national libraries, the opportunity of the Library of Congress is unique in another respect, in that it is the national library of a country whose library interests are enthusiastic and active in cooperative undertakings which will increase the efficiency of the material they hold and eliminate wasteful duplication of effort and expense.

"Practically all American libraries today have card catalogues. In these every book appears under its author, under the subjects of which it treats, and sometimes under its title, if the title differs from the subject. Some books have to appear in, perhaps, only two places, others in forty or fifty, where there are many authors and many subjects treated by them. On an average a book appears in from three to five different places. Now, the cards that libraries have used were in the first instance written; they then came to be typewritten, and in recent years they have in some libraries come to be printed. Printing is possible, of course, only for the larger libraries which are handling a large number of books and making elaborate catalogues—the New York public library prints, the Boston public library, the Harvard College library, the John Crerar of Chicago and even the Carnegie at Pittsburgh.

"The Library of Congress has for some time been printing. It has now within its walls a branch from the Government Printing Office.

"Now, the cost of getting any particular book into the card catalogue is far greater than the public has any notion of. There are various elements of cost; there is the work of the cataloguer, who is an expert; then there is the work of the transcriber, if you multiply copies of the card by transcription or by typewriter. If you print there is the cost of composition and presswork. The stock would cost the same whether you transcribe or print. But the two most costly factors are the work of the cataloguer, the expert, and the work of the compositor or transcriber. It has been estimated that on the average the total cost of

getting a book into a library catalogue is from 25 to 35 cents. Not a single volume, of course. A book may be in a hundred volumes, and yet represent only one title to be handled; but on the average the cost is from 25 to 35 cents for each book, or what the libraries refer to as a 'title.'

"Now, the interesting thing is that until now libraries have been in effect duplicating this entire expense; multiplying it, in fact, by each one undertaking to do the whole work individually for itself. There are thousands of books which are acquired by hundreds of libraries—exactly the same books, having the same titles, the same authors and contents and subject to the same processes. But each library has been doing individually the whole work of cataloguing the copies received by it, putting out the whole expense. . . .

"There have been distributions of printed cards on a small scale or covering special subjects. The United States Department of Agriculture distributes its card indexes to subscribers paying the cost of the extra copies provided for the purpose, and is thus making generally available in convenient form, at nominal cost, information of great value to investigators. The American Library Association (not as a scheme for profit, since it is not a commercial body, but merely as a measure of professional cooperation) has issued cards indexing certain scientific serials, and even cards cataloguing certain current books. But the association has no library nor any corps of expert cataloguers. For the material to be catalogued it had to depend upon voluntary gift or loan from the publishers. The cards issued did not cover enough titles to interest a large library; they covered too many to interest a small one. Yet a subscription had to be required for the entire series. There were never more than a hundred subscribers.

"Since the Library of Congress moved into the new building expectation has turned to it. . . . It receives these copyright deposit copies, on or before the date of publication—and thus in advance of any other library. . . . It is classifying and cataloging this material on its own account. It is printing the results in the form of cards.

It is reclassifying and recataloging its existing collection (excluding duplicates, over 700,000 books and pamphlets), and is printing these results also on cards. These cards are of the standard form, size, type and method of entry (the library has been in consultation for over a year past with a committee of the American Library Association—a committee of experts—in order to arrive at standards in all these respects). What it prints is an author card. It prints by way of memorandum on the card the subject headings that it will use on the copies destined for subject cards. The cost to it of the first author card, including the work of the cataloguer, is doubtless over 30 cents for each book. But a second copy of the card can be run off for a fraction of a cent.

“Now it is receiving this urgent appeal: To permit other libraries to order extra copies of the cards which will cover books that they are acquiring: just as they are permitted to secure extra copies of the card indexes of the Agricultural Department, or, indeed, of any government publication, paying the cost plus 10 per cent.

“The Library of Congress would be putting out no greater expert labor than before; the government would be fully reimbursed for the additional mechanical work and material; and the other libraries of this country would be saved an expense, which in the aggregate is now an enormous expense, of duplicating, indeed of multiplying many times over, the outlay on the two factors of cost which are the large factors . . . Between 1891 and 1896 there were 7,000,000 volumes added to the 4,000 libraries in the United States. These may have represented 500,000 different ‘books’ or ‘titles.’ The cost to catalogue these once, at 35 cents a title, would have been but \$175,000. They were catalogued many times over; how many times can only be guessed, for, of course, some books were acquired by only one library, others by hundreds of libraries. Assuming that on the average each book was catalogued only six times, the total cost to the 4,000 libraries was \$1,050,000. Could they have acted as a unit, having the books catalogued and the cards printed at

some central bureau and multiplying copies to supply the need of each, the total cost would certainly have been kept within \$300,000. The saving effected during this short period alone would, therefore, have been two-thirds of the total; on the basis assumed, over \$700,000.

"American instinct and habit revolt against multiplication of brain effort and outlay where a multiplication of results can be achieved by a machine. This appears to be a case where it may. Not every result, but results so great as to effect a prodigious saving to the libraries of this country. The Library of Congress cannot ignore the opportunity and the appeal. . . .

"The distribution of cards for current publications may begin very shortly. Very likely it will cover also the publications of the present calendar year, so that the undertaking will be coeval with the century. The cards first issued will doubtless be those for the current American copyrighted books. . . .

"The possible and actual use of the printed cards is not confined to the main catalogues, nor, indeed, to the catalogues at all. They can be used in catalogues of special subjects in the 'shelf list' of the library, and in various different records. Indeed, over a dozen different uses have been planned out of them for libraries, or in part adopted.

"What will become of the cataloguers?

"The cataloguers are perhaps the most enthusiastic for the project. Cataloguing is a work of many processes. The centralization will eliminate only two, and these the initial. It will free some human energy. In the smaller, more popular libraries this will be available for direct service to readers, of which these can never be sufficient. In the libraries for research the service freed will be available for advanced cataloguing and analytical work, and for other bibliographic work indispensable to the full efficiency of the library, but which now can little be afforded, owing to the necessary expense upon these two elementary processes" (30).

The announcement of the new service was sent to 400

libraries and 17 State library commissions on October 26th (31). The "much" was emerging.

At his domed office on Capitol Hill and in his rooms at the Albany on H Street (32)—Mrs. Putnam and their daughters being then in Europe—newcomer Putnam was, he insisted, "busily engaged in the practical administration of a particular Library," with "little time in which to meditate upon general problems" (33). But the plans, forming in his mind, were broad; they depended, for their execution, largely on the extent of his own powers.

Upon one subject his mind was made up: The American people were properly entitled to the freest access to the national resource over which he presided. To Charles Harris Hastings, later a member of his own staff, then President of the Bibliographical Society of Chicago, he wrote:

"I think students with a purpose should receive at the hands of the librarians not merely advice as to consulting the catalogues; but counsel as to the authoritative works on special subjects; and guidance as to unexpected sources of information. I do not see how it is possible to fix 'to what point the expenses of such service may be legitimately charged to the public.' I think that students who are engaged upon work tending to public improvement should receive the utmost assistance; and the cost of such assistance is very properly a 'charge on the public'; particularly is this of force in municipal and government libraries" (34).

Speaking here was the former public librarian, now endowed with a national perspective. But as a civil servant Herbert Putnam was learning the value of timing and of testing his own strength. Concerning interlibrary loans, he wrote to Willard Austin, of the Cornell University Library:

"You are aware, I think, of what would be my natural disposition in such a matter. I find, however, a usage in

the Library of Congress that definitely precludes the issue of books outside the limits of the District. While I am not prepared to say that this usage will continue indefinitely, I am not, on the other hand, prepared to make exceptions to it at present" (35).

And so Mr. Putnam waited until a deficiency appropriation act, approved March 3, 1901, provided "that facilities for research in the . . . Library of Congress . . . shall be afforded to scientific investigators and to duly qualified individuals, students and graduates of institutions of learning in the several States and Territories, as well as in the District of Columbia" (36), before inaugurating the loans of unusual books for unusual needs to libraries at a distance for the use of their eligible patrons. The first borrowers were Ohio State University and the Public Library of Rahway, New Jersey (37). But already, the Library of Congress was becoming less and less merely "a reference library for the District of Columbia."

It should not be supposed that Mr. Putnam's touch was always altogether magic, or that inevitably his spectacular building proved an irresistible attraction. When opportunistic, or acting in the interest of expediency, the object sometimes eluded him. But he was not one to be dismayed by difficulty or discouraged by thwarted effort. In the autumn of 1900, he prepared a State Paper. He composed it carefully, drafting (38) and redrafting it. Directed to the Honorable George Peabody Wetmore, who was at once a Senator from Rhode Island and Chairman of the Joint Committee on the Library, it read, in its final form, as follows:

October 20, 1900.

"SENATOR:—

"Shortly after the death of John Nicholas Brown, of Newport, Rhode Island, you called my attention to the clause of his will which relates to the disposition of his Biblioteca Americana, otherwise known as the John Carter Brown Library. This in terms embraces the collec-

tion conveyed to him (in 1898) by his mother Sophia Augusta Brown 'together with all the books, manuscripts, engravings and maps bought by (him) and given to (him) from time to time and considered as additions to the library,' etc. He directs the Trustees under the will to 'give' this collection (together with certain sums of money) 'to a Board of Trustees or to a corporation specially organized therefor, or to some college, university or other institution in said State of Rhode Island, *or in any other of the United States* competent to receive and hold the same,' with the purpose that it 'shall be considered a memorial to (his) father.' The Trustees are authorized to determine the 'manner' and 'terms' of such gift, taking care, however, that 'it shall be a good and valid gift to charitable uses' that the collection shall continue to bear the name of the John Carter Brown Library and 'shall preserve its individual identity as a whole.'

"The will thus confers upon the trustees a broad discretion, and in particular as to the place and institution which is to be the recipient of the gift. So far from limiting their choice to Providence or Rhode Island, the will itself suggests the alternative of 'some other of the United States.' Places other than Providence and outside of Rhode Island will therefore be considered by them before reaching their decision. And on this assumption you have requested me to submit in writing considerations in favor of the ultimate gift of the collection to the national Library of Congress at Washington.

"Those considerations would rest in part upon the distinctive characteristics of the Library of Congress as evolved through its gradual development. These, it seemed to me, could appropriately be stated by my associate, Dr. Spofford, out of his two-score years of actual relation with the Library. He has, accordingly, formulated a statement which I venture to enclose herewith.

"Without unnecessarily duplicating this statement, I may summarize the considerations which seem to me most important:

"1. The Testator clearly intended that the collection

should confer the widest possible benefit. Now whatever the benefit might be at Providence, it would be immeasurably greater at Washington. The books in the John Carter Brown Library are not books that in any practical way interest the ordinary reading community. They are books for the scholar. At Washington they would be available to a *nation* of scholars.

"2. They are Americana. They are essential to the thorough student of American history. Such a student *must* come to Washington. Should this collection remain at Providence, he must still come to Washington; for the bulk of his material will still be here; and the Brown Library, important as it is, will not be able to satisfy all his needs.

"3. The investigator in American research needs these books, needs them here. They cannot be duplicated for his use here. The bulk of the John Carter Brown collection is composed of books which are no longer obtainable, of which, in many cases, the John Carter Brown copies are the only ones known to exist, apart from a few in institutions from which they will never reappear in the market.

"4. The efficiency of such books is increased in proportion as they can be used (1) in connection with cognate material, (2) in connection with the reference books in general literature, and (3) in connection with activities in other branches of research.

"The Library of Congress has as its primary purpose the acquisition of Americana. Its specialty will be Americana. It will have ultimately, the largest single collection of books relating to America to be found in any institution. It has already the largest single collection in America of books representative of general literature, while its resources will enable it to increase its collection faster than will be possible for any merely local institution. It will inevitably become the greatest library on this continent.

"It is the National Library of the United States. It is thus a bureau of information for the entire country; and as to Americana for the entire country; and as to Americana for the entire world, for of all American libraries it will sustain the most active and intimate relations with

libraries abroad; and through the Smithsonian with all learned societies abroad. It will maintain a corps of highly trained experts who will make known its resources and will aid in research. It will undoubtedly become the most active center of research, for the largest area, of any library in America. It will not merely draw students to Washington; it will by correspondence stimulate research all over the United States. Every special collection in its custody will gain a wider publicity and a wider and more effective usefulness from association with these general activities.

"5. Washington, already a center of research, especially in American history, will tend to become *the* center of the United States. It is within easy access of four of the greatest American universities—Columbia, Princeton, Pennsylvania and Johns Hopkins (to say nothing of Virginia, Washington and Lee, and the many of lesser grade), in whose post-graduate courses historical research involving original investigation is increasingly prominent. It shares these advantages with New York and Philadelphia; but it possesses others for the student of American history which they cannot offer; the national archives, which they cannot duplicate; the great scientific collections (including the ethnological collections at the Smithsonian), and the scientific undertakings, which they cannot parallel; the national legislative, judicial, and administrative activities, to which they cannot pretend; and the National Library itself.

"6. In this Library the nation has advanced a most substantial claim to consideration. It has provided for it the largest, safest, most sumptuous, most costly library building in the world. This building would afford a superb setting for any memorial collection; *the* most appropriate setting for any such collection that records, as does the John Carter Brown Library, the origins of our national life.

"The nation is making provision which will build up within this building the most important single collection of books on this continent, and perhaps ultimately in the

world. The nation invites freely to the use of this collection scholars from whatever place, upon whatever subject of inquiry. It is providing for the maintenance of building and of library in an adequate and worthy manner. It is providing for the Library an organization which will render it to the fullest extent serviceable to scholars, and to the widest extent serviceable to the general public. Similar efforts upon a much less elaborate scale have sufficed to draw to the British Museum magnificent gifts from private individuals all over Great Britain.

"7. The utility of a benefaction is much in inducing other benefactions. The deposit here of the John Carter Brown Library would not merely in itself be a superb contribution to a national service, but by example would induce other gifts. It might draw to Washington from all over the United States material whose owners would rejoice in so honorable an association with so eminent a service. In this way its benefits to scholarship might be really commensurate with its contents.

"8. The will carries with it a sum of money as a permanent trust fund. The income of this may be applied to the purchase of books; but it may be diminished by expenditures for administration, insurance, repairs, and other expenses of maintenance. Yet it is the books themselves which at any one time would constitute the real memorial. The part of the income diverted to mere maintenance, will diminish the extent and significance of this memorial.

"Were the collection to come to the Library of Congress, undoubtedly the trust fund could be so far relieved of the expense of maintenance that substantially the entire income would add to the permanent memorial.

* * *

"As the Librarian of Congress, having a special duty to this Library, I could not but take advantage of your invitation to submit these suggestions. I do so with this reluctance: that an effort to secure the collection for Washington might seem to imply an effort to take it away

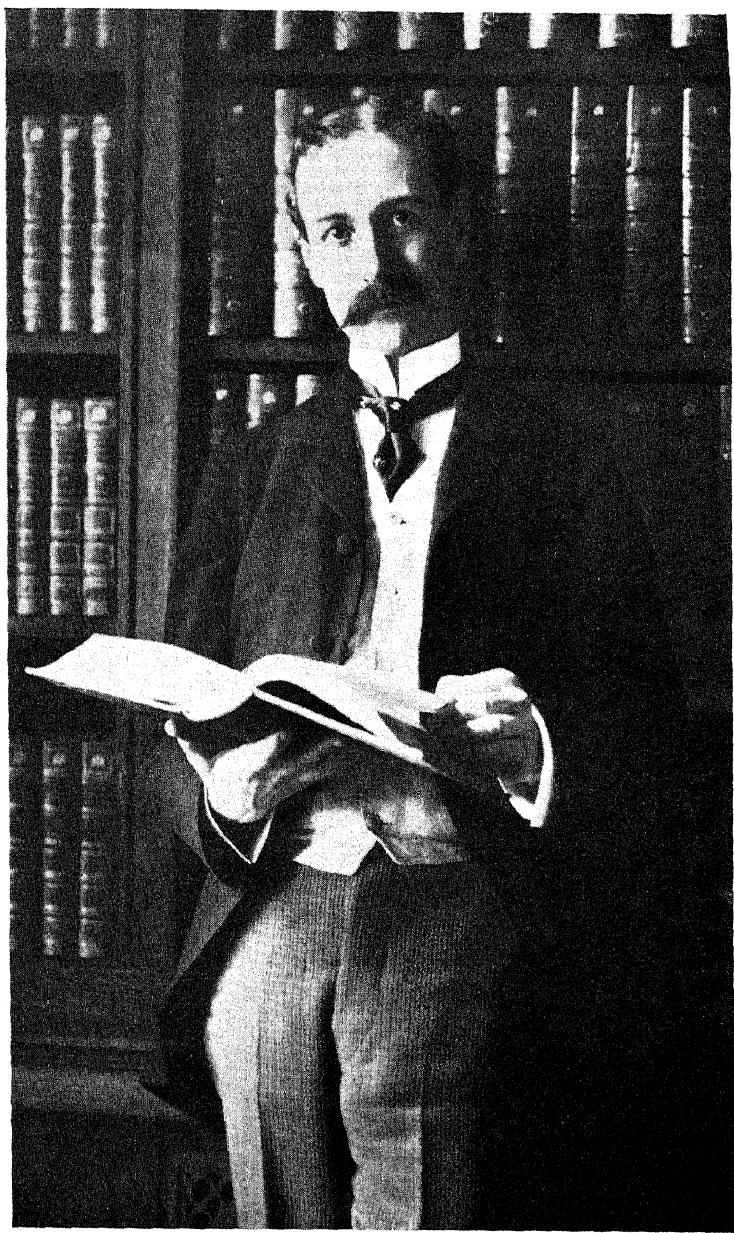
from Providence. I cannot disparage the claim of Providence as the home of Mr. John Nicholas Brown and of Mr. John Carter Brown, and the beneficiary of so much devoted generosity from them both. The collection cannot, however, be in both places; and I cannot very well draw attention to what I must consider the superior advantages of the location here, without contrasting the disadvantages of the location there. These disadvantages are, of course, merely relative. The efficiency of a collection of books is always a relative efficiency. But I believe that no librarian would differ from the main proposition, that whatever this efficiency may be or might become at Providence, it would be immeasurably greater at Washington. This, because of the character of the collection, of the character of Washington, of the character of the Library of Congress, and of the opportunities for useful service which it would afford.

"I am told that when the Testator visited the Library of Congress in the company of the late Librarian, Mr. John Russell Young, the suggestion was offered that the John Carter Brown library might find an appropriate resting place here; and that while not expressly assented to, it was received by him without apparent distaste.

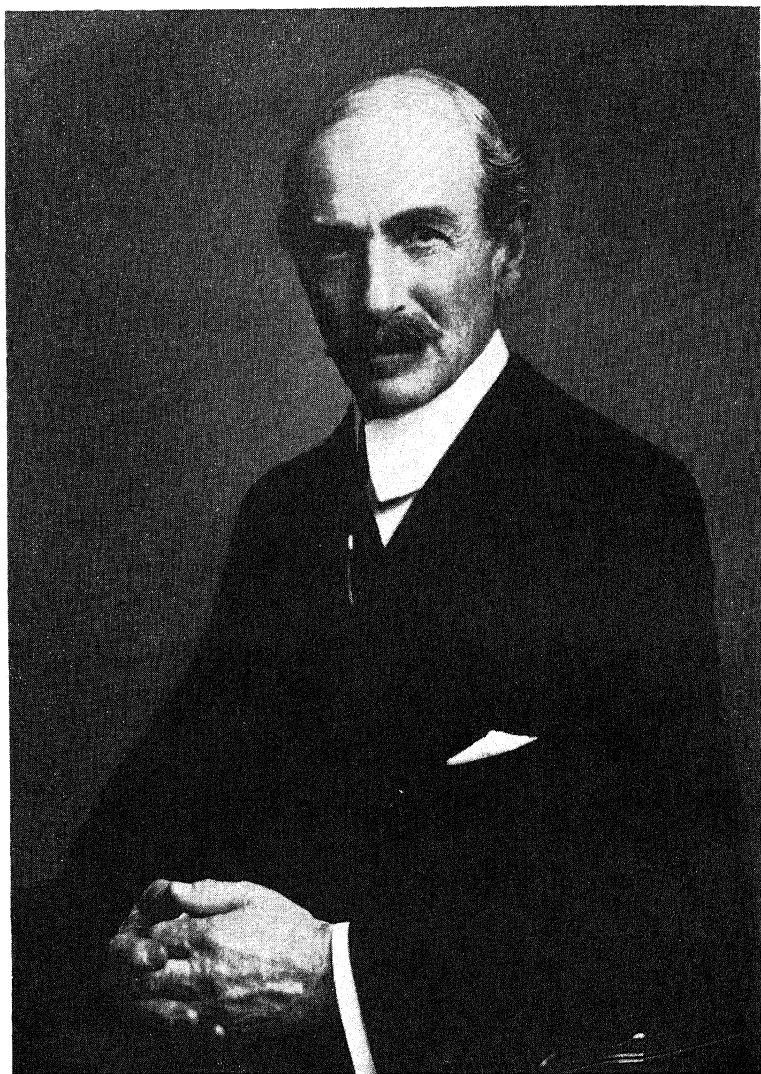
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"I have written as moderately as I have found it possible to write. But it is difficult to be moderate in expression when the affair is a collection of such signal importance and the opportunities for usefulness so obvious and so impressive. Mr. John Carter Brown and the others who have brought together these books, have by their very accumulation performed a great public service—a service that has secured profound admiration. The will of Mr. John Nicholas Brown adds to this an opportunity for a usefulness so wide, so lasting and so honorable that no librarian could be expected to estimate it in terms short of enthusiasm" (39).

Now as a brief, as an argument in support of an explicit



A photographic portrait of Herbert Putnam made by Frances Benjamin Johnston in 1900, a year after he became Librarian of Congress.

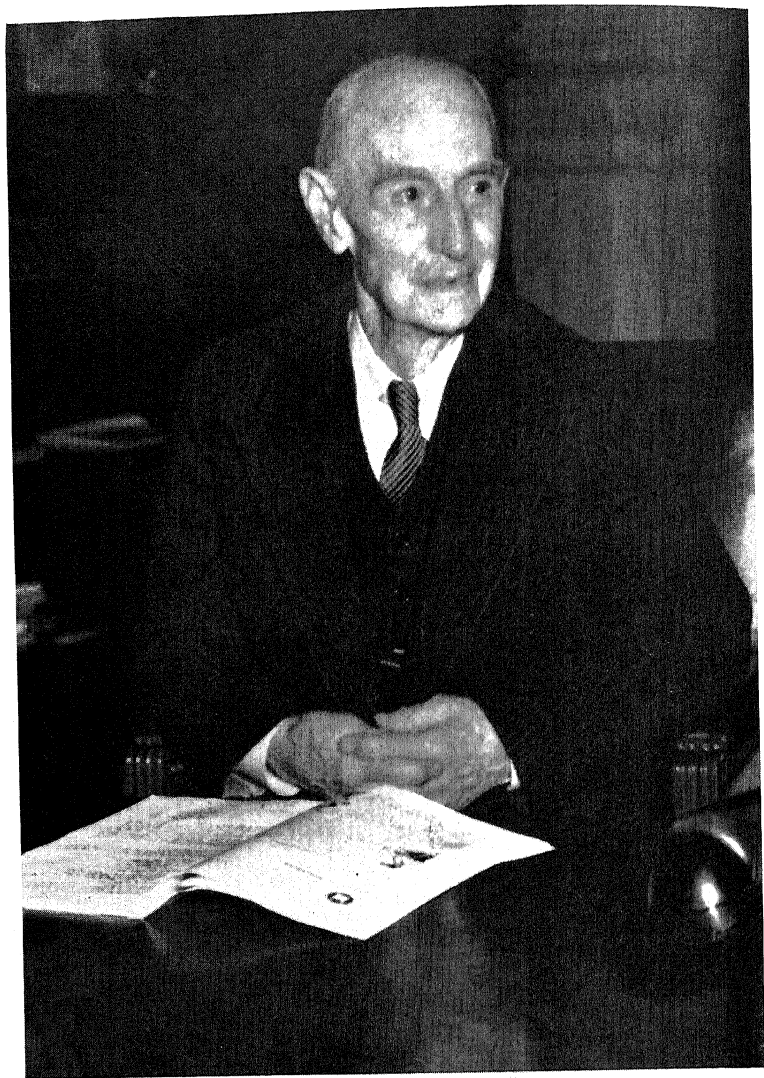


An Underwood and Underwood Photograph

"The Librarian" in 1921.



Skipper of The Olga. A snapshot of H.P. at 84 made at Cape Porpoise, Me., by his friend, Zechariah Chafee, professor of law at Harvard.



The Librarian of Congress Emeritus in 1950 receiving a visitor in "the cell of the Emeritus," as he dubbed his spacious quarters in the Library.

course of action, the document was unsuccessful. It was delivered to Senator Wetmore's office in the Capitol (the Senator himself being away from Washington) where, because of a "type written address, it appeared to be an official circular & was in with a quantity of supposed unimportant matter" and was not immediately forwarded "with the class of mail" which the Senator "had left instructions to have remailed." Eventually, on November 3, to be exact, Mrs. Wetmore found it on the billiard table of their Newport home. The Senator, in acknowledging it the following day, promised Mr. Putnam that he would "shortly, carefully look over yr letter and Dr. Spofford's statement" (40). If he did, the perusal did not have the effect of transplanting the John Carter Brown Library to the banks of the Potomac. Instead, a merciful Providence (as some would suppose) preserved it for Rhode Island, where it has prospered in "relative" glory ever since.

But it is not as exemplifying an essay in futility that Mr. Putnam's eloquent pronouncement has been transcribed. It is, rather, because of its magnificently accurate projection of the Library of Congress and its future stature in the world of learning that it has been recovered from the oblivion to which it was consigned more than fifty-five years ago. As prophecy it commands respect, because what it foretold has come to pass. As an illustration of his assurance, awareness, aspiration it is unexcelled. But in its undertone can be heard distinctly a calm, cultivated whisper: "This promise I make to myself."

In those first years, a principal preoccupation of Herbert Putnam was the gathering of his forces. Applications were received by the hundreds. Each was civilly, but noncommittally, acknowledged. To demands for patronage, he would reply that unfortunately the only existing openings were for posts requiring special training and experience: qualifications which the particular constituent appeared to lack; he would, however, be happy to receive recommendations in behalf of more eligible candidates. Actually, he gave personal attention to the recruitment and selection of the staff. The letterbooks are

filled with messages to the deans of library schools asking for the names and aptitudes of outstanding students. He was in constant correspondence with other librarians concerning, in minute detail, the demonstrated abilities, personality traits, and supposed capacities of those ambitious men and women who sought to transfer their careers to the Seat of Government, and to join in what appeared to them to be a great emprise. When, after the approval of the appropriations for the fiscal year 1901, he had settled upon the many new appointments, he sent a list of all their names, together with their qualifications, to the professional journals and to organizations concerned with the advancement of library science.

He was fashioning an élite corps. Some of its members were willing, even eager, to accept compensation at a rate of less than a dollar a day; others (astonishingly many) blithely begged (and for a time were permitted) to present their services absolutely free in exchange for training and experience. But where positions were of critical significance to the development of the Library, Mr. Putnam disdainfully rejected the niggardly salaries attaching to them. Thus, in submitting his estimates for the fiscal year 1902, he informed the Secretary of the Treasury:

"This position [Chief of the Division of Manuscripts] became vacant September 1st [1901]. I am holding it vacant until the salary shall be placed at a sum which will enable me to secure for it a thoroughly adequate person. This division deals with the material which forms one of the two greater divisions in a national library. . . . The interests involved are altogether too important to be entrusted to a second-rate man" (41).

The staff or, to use his own term for it, the "force" with which Herbert Putnam surrounded himself was composed of extremely able men and women, infused with a sense of mission, dedication, and their almost limitless opportunities for patriotic endeavor. They were competent, conscientious, devoted; their lives governed not by the

length of the work-day but by the work on hand. For this, there would always be too few. Mr. Putnam, at the close of the first six months of his administration, drew attention to the fact that

“During the past year nearly every regular employee of the [Copyright] Office has without extra compensation worked over time. The total of over time for that year (excluding the personal over time of the Register whose working day rarely ends until 10 o'clock) has amounted to 9,789 hours: the equivalent of $7\frac{1}{2}$ clerks for an entire working year” (42).

Much the same could have been claimed for other units of the Library—and for himself. He was slow to delegate powers; meanwhile there were countless interviews to conduct, callers to receive, letters to compose in that idiom that was so inimitably his own, recommendations to approve or to reject, vouchers to sign, instructions to transmit, and inflexible decisions to reach. And, in addition to the immeasurable, the appalling complexities, interventions, exasperations of administrative routine, there was the necessity of determining the destination of his Library, the dimensions to which it would aspire, the objects which it would be designed to serve, the purpose for which it would exist and steadily move forward. Herbert Putnam was called upon to act as architect for a structure which would grow and grow and never be quite complete. For him those first years were the years of planning. There was nothing tentative in the plans that emerged. They were final, complete; the task thereafter would be the task of execution.

Theodore Roosevelt's first Annual Message, dated December 3, 1901, contained two paragraphs on “an activity of the Federal Government which” had “not yet received mention” in such a document (43); they read:

“Perhaps the most characteristic educational movement of the past fifty years is that which has created the modern

public library and developed it into broad and active service. There are now over five thousand public libraries in the United States, the product of this period. In addition to accumulating material, they are also striving by organization, by improvement in method, and by co-operation, to give greater efficiency to the material they hold, to make it more widely useful, and by avoidance of unnecessary duplication in process to reduce the cost of its administration.

"In these efforts they naturally look for assistance to the Federal library, which, though still the Library of Congress, is the one national library of the United States. Already the largest single collection of books on the Western Hemisphere, and certain to increase more rapidly than any other through purchase, exchange, and the operation of the copyright law, this library has a unique opportunity to render to the libraries of this country—to American scholarship—service of the highest importance. It is housed in a building which is the largest and most magnificent yet erected for library uses. Resources are now being provided which will develop the collection properly, equip it with the apparatus and service necessary for its effective use, render its bibliographic work widely available, and enable it to become, not merely a center of research, but the chief factor in great co-operative efforts for the diffusion of knowledge and the advancement of learning" (44).

It should not imperil the national security, pain the fastidious and the credulous, or create convulsive surprise to announce to a candid world that these passages were based upon an *aide-memoire* submitted by the Librarian of Congress himself. The basic document, from which they were distilled, described the Library of Congress as

" . . . an executive activity and it affects, and it is likely increasingly to affect, interests throughout the country which are already large and in the aggregate represent an entire system of education.

“The activity to which I refer is that through which the Federal Government has amassed a collection of material which now, excluding duplicates, exceeds 700,000 books and pamphlets and 400,000 other items:—the largest single such collection on the western hemisphere; has erected for this a building which, with the ground, has cost \$7,000,000; has provided for its increase, further equipment and maintenance appropriations amounting, this year, to over \$500,000, and is providing for its care, development and usefulness an organization which already exceeds 400 persons.

“The Library of Congress began as a merely legislative library. While at the Capitol it could be little more than this. The entire force consisted of but 42 persons, including the 24 engaged in the copyright work. The new building, the new provision of space, equipment, and expert service denote a purpose to elevate the Library into one national in scope and service. The Library is already familiarly entitled the ‘National Library of the United States.’ If it is not such, there is none other which is.

“A national library for the United States should mean in some respects much more than a national library in any other country hitherto meant. [Hear the echo from the *Evening Star* interview.] The public library in its modern form began in the United States fifty years ago. It is receiving a development here not paralleled elsewhere, in the activity of its service for the general public and also for the scholar. There are over 5,000 public libraries in the United States today. Nearly \$50,000,000 have been invested in buildings for them; they contain over 40,000,000 volumes. In addition to their reference use they send out each year nearly 45,000,000 volumes into the homes of the United States. Great sums have been given to them: \$16,000,000 in the past year alone.

“In the aggregate they represent a great educational interest distinct from the schools; and the movement which has resulted in their creation, development, and enrichment is the most characteristic movement in education during the past half century.

“Now as a whole, these libraries in the United States are organizing their work with reference to uniformity in methods, to cooperation in processes, to interchange of service, and in general, to the promotion of efficiency in service. They look to the National Library for standards, for example, for leadership in all these enterprises. It is now in a position to ‘standardize’ library methods, to promote cooperation, to aid in the elimination of wasteful duplication, to promote interchange of bibliographic service. And not merely by the accumulation and liberal administration of a great collection at Washington, but by the distribution of the results of its bibliographic work which it is putting upon that collection it will be able to perform a service of the greatest utility to the library interests of the United States and to American scholarship.

“The past two and a half years have been in part preparation for such a service. Equipment, apparatus, and experts are being acquired. The material brought over from the old building is being digested and differentiated; separate divisions have been organized for the printed books, maps, manuscripts, music, prints, documents. The copyright work has been set off. In place of 14 cataloguers there are now 70 persons, competent experts, engaged in the acquisition of books and the preparation of them for use. There is now within the building a bindery with 45 hands; a printing office with 21: both branches of the Government Printing Office, efficiently equipped by the Public Printer and devoted solely to the work of the Library.

“Considering the above: What this Library now already represents in the way of an investment; what it seems to purpose on the part of the Federal Government towards this great system of education, what its opportunities are as the culminating effort in a library system covering the entire country: considering also the enthusiastic public approval of the building provided for it, the enthusiastic expectation which the library interests of the country cherish for the service which it may do:—has not the time come for some reference to it in a statement which includes

a summary by the Chief Executive of the notable executive activities of the Government?

"The Library is one of those activities: it will be in a relation of service to nearly all of the others. It will be the centre of the system of federal libraries at Washington, supplementing each, helping to coordinate all, centralizing processes, aiding towards specialization and cooperation: promoting, in short, an organization among them which will affect and advantage the work of legislation, the work of administration, and the scientific research centred at the Capital.

"The suggestion is submitted. I venture this other: that should such a reference appear not inappropriate, even the briefest one made at this time might have a far greater practical value than an extended one later.

"The Library is now to initiate some of those projects of service for which the past four years have prepared. In these it will make return to the country for the recent great expenditure upon it. A mention now would call notice to the service and promote it; would reassure as to the propriety of the expenditure already made, and would ensure against diminution of it to the injury of the larger service proposed" (45).

It had taken Herbert Putnam thirty months to write the Great Prospectus. He was, he declared:

"... quite sure that every assertion is within the fact without hyperbole. I am now familiar with the disposition of Congress regarding the Library and the views and expectations of the public and of the library profession. I can safely say that the memorandum contains no statement nor intimation which would conflict with either" (46).

This emphasis upon Herbert Putman's Washington novitiate is not placed because it represents him at the height of his career, nor does it carry with it the implication that his powers thereafter waned. They did nothing of the sort; actually they increased and multiplied. But

without an understanding of the Introduction (which has never before been fully related, even by himself), it is impossible to understand the course he set, the course he followed, the course that brought him into greatness. There were no deviations from it. Herbert Putnam's "responsible eye" was always fixed upon a forward object. Open was the eye—and alert and keen.

For Herbert Putnam's career was distinguished from the careers of other public men in this: that he had a dream and brought it to life. He was Pygmalion to the Library's Galatea.

He spoke of himself as having "tended" (47) the Library—a verb usually associated with the cultivation of gardens, the care of children, the treatment of the infirm. Himself a master of the *mot juste*, it held, from time to time, all these meanings for him. He saw the Library enlarge: a stack for the southeast courtyard, a stack for the northeast courtyard, an auditorium, a pavilion, the eastern extension, the functional Annex. He worked and watched as the manuscript collections became the greatest body in existence of research materials for the study of the American past—as the music collections attained pre-eminence—as the map collections were acknowledged to be unparalleled—as the print collections acquired not only numerical superiority but displayed evidence of distinction. It was from his constant interest and concern that there came those stores of Slavica, Sinica, Semitica, Indica, Hispanica. It was his card catalog which outgrew that cabinet within the central desk, was removed to a sector in the Reading Room, and thence expanded into adjoining quarters. It was he who founded the Legislative Reference Service. It was he who brought about the legislation creating the Library of Congress Trust Fund Board and who brought to the support of prized undertakings those first endowments. It was under him that the National Union Catalog (which was in being when first he arrived on the scene) received fresh impetus and gained new stature. It was he who founded a photoduplication service and secured a sound laboratory. It was he who sent missions

to Europe to procure reproductions of manuscripts in foreign archives relating to the history of the United States, and who established a representative in Paris. It was he who developed the first broad, national program for providing books for the adult blind and promoted the distribution of Talking Books. And it was Herbert Putnam who so superbly obeyed the first commandment of his office:

“He who stands at the head of America’s foremost library must mingle with the foremost men of science and literature, native & foreign, who resort to it, or correspond with it, on terms of something like equality” (48).

The Putnam epoch extended from 1899 to 1939 and its annals are set forth in those forty volumes which contain his reports to the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate. The narrative is progressive, the style is rarely dull (and then only when another hand than his composed it); it is the story of an institution responding to a natural force known as “Putnam’s law.” The honors, the new dignities, that came to the Library were sometimes matters for “gratulation”—a favored word—but they never reached the fever-point of being rapturously unexpected. Indeed, to the seeker of the Putnam secret there comes a realization that among the subtleties and indefinables one formidable element can be isolated: consistency.

When, in 1936, members of his staff were preparing an exhibit for the Dallas exposition in observance of the centennial of the independence of Texas, Mr. Putnam was asked to compose a slogan which might be hung in large letters above the display, and which would express the distinguishing features of the Library of Congress. He thought for a moment and then, taking a slip of paper, wrote: “Universal in scope; national in service.” It was apt, of course, and memorable. But it was no sudden improvisation; it had been forming on his tongue and shaping on his pen for more than three decades (49). There was constancy in that.

And perhaps a new sense of satisfaction too because it had come to pass. But there was no arrogance, no bloated pride in it. Mr. Putnam frowned on ostentation. For himself and for the Library, he insisted on a strict adherence to the Wordsworth precept of

“Plain living and high thinking . . .

The homely beauty of the good old cause (50).”

His own simplicity was demonstrated in a striking way when he was General Director of the Library War Service of the American Library Association during the first World War. The anecdote is related by Burton Egbert Stevenson, of Chillicothe, a colleague and distinguished anthologist:

“I met him first [wrote Mr. Stevenson] when he came out here in the early fall of 1917 to look over the work I had been doing in organizing the library at Camp Sherman, and he endeared himself to me at once because he was upset over having broken the stem of his pipe. (I am a pipe-smoker myself.) The first thing we did was to get a new one.

“It was he, of course, who selected me to head the work in Europe, and he also, by some miracle, arranged for Mrs. Stevenson to go along. She had just lost her mother, and I refused to go without her. . . .

“Before he came to France in 1919 to look over our work, I had engaged for him an attractive little suite in a hotel at the Rond-Point on the Champs Elysées, which I had seen while calling on Owen Johnson. The first thing he did was to yank Mrs. Stevenson and me out of the little room we had been occupying at the Hotel des Saints Pères on the other side of the river, install us in his suite, and take for himself a small neighboring room, with privilege of our bath!

“I doubt if you knew that he had a serious operation while he was in France. He had been suffering a good deal, but had said nothing to anyone, and when an operation became imperative, he confided only in me, giving me such

instructions as he thought necessary. It was an operation necessitating complete anaesthesia, about which there is always more or less danger, and I shall never forget how delighted I was when I went out to the hospital the day after the operation, to find him sitting up. He made a rapid recovery and so far as I know a complete one.

"When he first saw me in Paris he remarked that I was wearing the ribbon of the National Institute of Arts and Letters, of which he also was a member. I explained that I was wearing it because ribbons were more highly thought of in France than in America. He agreed, and went at once to put his in his buttonhole" (51).

In appearance, he was ever immaculate but never conspicuous. The frock coat, worn in the early years, gave way, in time, to tweeds, the winged collar was replaced by a soft roll, the ascot became a four-in-hand. But just as Abraham Lincoln is symbolized for some by a tall hat and an umbrella, so a brown reefer and a Harvard bag must always be the marks of Herbert Putnam; and to these, for those who saw him in later days, might now and then be added a white vest with brass buttons. He always seemed a faithful portrait of himself.

But it was not attire that made the image unforgettable. It was that finely molded head, the curly hair parted straight as a gash in the center; the eyes that looked at and through and way beyond; the finely chiselled features that seemed to contradict prevailing notions of the origin of the species; the countenance which could be at once impassive and expressive; the lithe, unmindful, rhythmic gait; the gently shrugging shoulders; the eloquent, emphatic, darting fingers; the uncommon unity, synchronization, fusion of body, mind, and spirit: that bespoke a *complete* man.

By common assent Herbert Putnam was a Patrician. It is doubtful that he would have betrayed the same distress in a toga as that manifested by discomfited General Washington in Mr. Greenough's marble effigy. It is unlikely that he would have felt or looked ridiculous wearing a crown of laurels in lieu of a fedora. He was an Otho

Cushing sort of man. It was sometimes rumored that his correct address was not O Street, North West, but in care of a mountain retreat. Certainly there *was* a lofty, Olympian quality in his bearing.

On this point his friends and foes concurred. Some there were who held that he was aloof, remote, detached, insensitive to his surroundings, disdainful of the petty preoccupations of lesser men. Casual companions on the links of Chevy Chase have reported that on a summer's day, when he would stroke and follow a tiny ball, he was sometimes seen copiously to perspire ice-cubes (52).

That he was subjected to an impenetrable dignity cannot be denied. He possessed no gifts for glib or sudden intimacy. He rarely gave or asked a confidence. He kept his own counsel. His emotions were indiscernible. No associate ever called him by his given name. If he was frustrated, as he sometimes was, the effrontery produced no outburst of outraged and vernacular fulmination. He could vent his scorn with a precision and elegance which, in the auditor, would arrest circulation and scar the flesh, but a show of anger he regarded as unbecoming. The vulgarities of slang, he dismissed as "F Street" language (53). He was temperate in all things—passionately temperate and fastidious.

But it were foolish to think of him as being cold, and more foolish still to think of him as seeking to promote that belief. It is true that he disliked excessive heat—his prolonged summer absences from Washington were proof of that abhorrence—but there was warmth in his feelings, warmth in his loyalties, warmth in his responsiveness. Too much a man of the world to be stayed by self-consciousness, it is possible to imagine that the constraints of office sometimes curtailed his personality.

Between the staff and Herbert Putnam, the Librarian of Congress intervened. It was due neither to indifference on the one hand, nor to diffidence on the other. It was the result of a carefully cultivated concept that the Library was invested with a composite personality of all the personalities who served it—apart from the Library and their

service to it, the staff was reft of individual identities. But in that little realm Mr. Putnam was supreme. More than the dispenser of livelihoods, he was the ruler of lives. It is doubtful that he understood these forces, separating him from his subordinates. There was evidence of this at the observance of his thirtieth anniversary, April 5, 1929, when he composed an encyclical:

"The encomiums upon me personally [he wrote] went so far that, while accepting as one does, the sheer kindness of them in the spirit in which it was meant, I was obliged to protest an excess which I felt to be *rationaly* inadmissible. It consisted, not in overpraise of the Library in what it has become, not in over-valuation of its aims, not even in a too-liberal appraisal of the service that I have rendered—but in a disproportionate view of my function in relation to the Library as an organism.

"The protest was not made out of modesty . . . but because of my urgent concern that the personality to be considered significant is the personality of the institution itself, of which the personalities of the staff, including myself, are merely components.

"It is, I say, that embracing personality which is my main concern. It must, even more especially, be yours. For though I may attempt definitions of it, and from time to time secure resources for the freer realization of it, the actual development of it rests chiefly with you. The major task will be yours; and the *will* for it must be yours.

"And therefore, in sharing with you the commendations of these days, and the new zests which they inspire, let me ask you to give still freer exercise to those qualities in you without which, in spite of building, books, and apparatus, the Library will never express or fulfill its proper nature.

"And I ask it of you, not as subordinates, serving under me, but as associates, serving *abreast* of me" (54).

There was no condescension, however unconscious, in this exhortation; it was addressed: "To my Immediate Family—All Six Hundred of You." On the contrary, there is every reason to believe that, on his own part,

Herbert Putnam felt a sense of close kinship with his appointees. One who was closer to him, perhaps, than any other has written of "the long rich years" given by "his beloved Library family," and has told how he "used to come home always heartened by his hours at the Library, buoyed with appreciation of the accomplishments of each and all" (55). Such assurances are indisputable; but, more than this, they expose a quality of his nature not always quite transparent.

For to the staff, Herbert Putnam bore a relationship not unlike the relationship of the Great White Father to the aborigines of North America. He was venerated. He was endowed with extraordinary gifts. He was changeless and timeless. He was a spirit cast in the image of other men but too carefully socked and booted ever to suggest affliction with ceramic feet. For his mistakes—they were rarely discoverable—he was readily, quickly absolved. His actions were sometimes inexplicable, incredible, inscrutable, but there was confidence in his wisdom, in his judgment, in his foresightedness.

He was stern. He exacted the highest standards of professional and personal conduct. He could mete out reprimand with waspish elegance and laceration. He had his Siberias to which to condemn the exiles. For the "good of the service" he was not restrained by any "practical" or mundane consideration from the instant exercise of his dismissal powers. He was patient with less than perfect competence; intolerant only of disloyalty to usage and the canon. But he was not unjust, not easily provoked, not recklessly, impetuously, incensed. So far from being a martinet, he was so calm, precise, equitable, informed a disciplinarian that the transgressor (unless a hopeless dullard) found the charge unanswerable and himself incapable of rebuttal.

It would be true to say that he was not prodigal in praise, holding, as he did, a certain excellence to be a proper, natural, even requisite, expectation. His approval was usually tacitly expressed. But when the public, the press, or the politically puissant unfairly impugned,

impeached, or inveighed against, his blameless cohorts, he was promptly their outraged, withering, formidable defender. He could utterly destroy a churl, humble a poltroon, and repudiate a bare imposture. When champion, protector, or advocate, Herbert Putnam was unassailable. He knew himself to be as inseparable from the staff as he was from the Library itself. He once wrote:

“The development [of the Library] is not, of course, just *my* story; but the story of my own . . . past . . . is so merged in it as to be insignificant apart from it. In the interest of it I have avoided association with outside enterprises not directly contributory to it, and have reduced merely social relations to a minimum” (56).

Of course, the staff's pride in him was inordinate: pride in his urbanity, suavity, courage, understanding, prescience. There was pride in his wit; in his intellectual gaiety and exuberance. There was pride in his attraction for the learned men who sat at his Round Table in the Library's attic, or who hovered about his place in the Cosmos Club. There was pride in his eloquence, his idiom, the faultless style of his compositions. There was pride in his ethos, his equity, his moral hardihood. There was pride in his punctilio, in his sense of fitness and unfitness, in a tradition which first he made and then he served. And more than pride, there was gratitude for his honor, which was never humbled, never compromised, never diminished. The Putnam legacy is a wisp o grandeur.

Twice he was called upon to make what he termed an “exemplary exit” (57). He made the first on October 1, 1939, when he acceded to the post of Librarian of Congress Emeritus. It was then that he withdrew to new chambers in the northwest pavilion, where he, unobtrusive and unobtruding, might watch the Library as it was maneuvered by other hands than his. If he was pained by what he saw, the hurt drew from him no cry of anguish, no measured protest, no demurrer of whatever kind. Scrupulously, he

avoided any show of concern. He never injected himself into any situation, never interposed objection, never volunteered an opinion, never overtly expressed a doubt or audibly sounded an alarm. Herbert Putnam and his unparalleled experience were accessible. There, he was available for consultation, for counsel, for collaboration. He would have been, for the newcomers, a magnificent ally. But he could not have been wholly insensitive to his isolation. There were times, then, when his thoughts turned to Mr. Spofford, whom *he* had superseded more than half a century before. Once he uttered them, saying:

“Very few executives have had the fortune to live with their posterity and to be welcomed with a eulogy instead of an elegy. But if you are summoning shades of the past, you must not fail to summon one shade and keep *him* contemporary—the valiant, persistent (I was seeking for the other word) and it is ‘forecasting,’ ‘foretelling,’ ‘prophesying’—shade . . . Ainsworth Spofford” (58).

At least there was continuity, movement, generation. There was permanence and strength and animation.

Occasionally he seemed frail, but he had always seemed frail. Some there were who said his step was not quite so agile as once it was. Word came that forming cataracts obscured his vision. But Herbert Putnam was imperishable. He had lived so long. He had survived so many. Surely he *would* go on, *must* go on, indefinitely. . . . His mind was keen, his memory clear, his resolution indomitable. Herbert Putnam was still impeccable. It was folly to suppose that mortality—mere mortality—would be his undoing. Even to his family he seemed “almost invulnerable—as though he could live forever” (59).

But on August 1, 1955, while vacationing, he sustained a fractured hip when he tripped on the street. The summer had been one of his happiest and most invigorating. The break was set with a “pin and plate,” at the Hyannis Hospital, by a noted Boston surgeon, Dr. Gerald L. Doherty. It mended so rapidly that he could be moved on the 13th

to a comfortable rest home on a hill at Falmouth, near Woods Hole. There he appeared happy and more relaxed. but his gallant old heart was tired. At nine-thirty on Sunday evening, August 14, just after his daughters had bade him goodnight, Herbert Putnam "died peacefully in bed" (60). Doctors gave as the cause a coronary thrombosis. Herbert Putnam, for a second time, had made an "exemplary exit." Across the sea, an English colleague noted that "with Herbert Putnam . . . there passes away the Panizzi of the twentieth century, one of the two great formative lives of the library profession" (61).

But Herbert Putnam had only withdrawn a little further. He might have said again, as he had said once before:

"It wasn't the commander laying aside the baton; it was merely a departing guest who was concluding a visit with you—a visit that had been in some ways precious—and was now going out with only friendship and contented memories behind him" (62).

Peace to his ashes, and a solemn, grateful, amen! Throughout this place, "that embracing personality" is very much alive and hard at work.

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Herbert Putnam

A Bibliography

This bibliography lists writings and addresses, published and unpublished, by Dr. Herbert Putnam, and also books and articles written about him. As in the case of any man prominent in public affairs over an extended period, a bibliography of this type cannot pretend to be complete. Some items of only passing interest have been omitted and there are undoubtedly numerous writings about Dr. Putnam, as well as products of his own pen, of which no bibliographic record is extant. The principal sources utilized in the compilation of the bibliography include the standard catalogs and indexes available in the Library of Congress, its official files of his writings and addresses, and his personal papers in the Manuscripts Division. His statements before various committees of Congress have also been listed. The number of references to writings about Dr. Putnam and to his briefer public utterances can undoubtedly be enlarged through examination of sources that are not covered in the standard indexes, such as newspapers (particularly the Washington press) and publications of professional associations, schools, etc., which he may have addressed during the extensive travels that marked the early period of his career.

Annotations are provided to the bibliographic references mainly to explain relationships to other references or to point to significant features which might otherwise escape notice.

The two sections of the bibliography, "Writings and Addresses" and "Biography and Comment," have different arrangements. That of the first section is mainly chronological, and whenever possible the date of delivery of an address rather than the date of publication serves as

the basis for the order of the listing. In the case of entries covering more than one year the item is listed under the first date. Entries in the second section are arranged alphabetically by author or by title if no author is given.

Works in the general classified collections are accompanied by their call number; in all other cases an appropriate symbol indicating location of the item is given.

KEY TO SYMBOLS

- MSS Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division
- NCF No copy found
- OS Library of Congress, Office of the Secretary
- RL Library of Congress, Recording Laboratory
- SD Library of Congress, Serials Division

WRITINGS AND ADDRESSES

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Herbert Putnam, Librarian.

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Nov. 21, 1918, for 1920: p. 3-22.

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Nov. 22, 27, 1920, for 1922: p. 3-9, 24-28.

Jan. 16, 1922, for 1923: p. 84-113.

Jan. 8, 1923, for 1924: p. 42-86.

Apr. 11, 1924, for 1925: p. 71-90, 95-119.

Jan. 12, 13, 1925, for 1926: p. 63-102.
 Mar. 11, 1926, for 1927: p. 103-124.
 Jan. 27, 1927, for 1928: p. 99-123.
 Mar. 23, 24, 1928, for 1929: p. 257-305.
 Feb. 6, 1929, for 1930: p. 106-121.
 Apr. 3, 1930, for 1931: p. 194-231.
 Jan. 19, 20, 1931, for 1932: p. 74-116.
 Mar. 18, 1932, for 1933: p. 101-124.
 Jan. 24, 25, 1933, for 1934: p. 82-88, 97-130.
 Feb. 15, 1934, for 1935: p. 153-203.
 Apr. 12, 1935, for 1936: p. 105-170, 174-175.
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 Mar. 17, 1938, for 1939: p. 80-142.
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HJ10.B35

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 Feb. 10, 1909, for 1910: p. 1105-1110.
 Jan. 26, 1915, for 1916: p. 922-924.
 Apr. 7, 1916, for 1917: p. 1350-1354.
 Mar. 31, 1920, for 1921: p. 2364-2367.
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HJ10.B8

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 Aug. 28, 1916, for 1916: p. 330-331.
 Jan. 7, 1918, for 1918: p. 33-37.
 Jan. 17, 1921, for 1921: p. 29-30.
 Apr. 29, 1921, for 1921: p. 3-5.
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 Apr. 6, 1937, for 1937: p. 6-8.

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HJ10.B43

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 Apr. 23, 1906, for 1907: p. 71-77.
 Dec. 29, 1906, for 1908: p. 24-26.
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 Jan. 8, 1909, for 1910: p. 56-58.

- Mar. 21, 1910, for 1911: p. 17-19.
 Jan. 17, 1911, for 1912: p. 3-11.
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 Dec. 13, 1912, for 1914: p. 3-12.
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- Excerpt.* *Library journal*, v. 25, Feb. 1900: 63-65.
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- What it means to be a librarian. *Ladies' home journal*, v. 17, Feb. 1900: 22. port.
 AP2.L135, v. 17
- Library of Congress. *Outlook*, v. 65, May 12, 1900: 122-124.
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- Relation of state libraries and the Library of Congress. *Library journal*, v. 25, Dec. 1900: 729-733.
 Z671.L7, v. 25
- A paper read before the National Association of State Librarians at Harrisburg, Pa., Nov. 21, 1900.
- Education for library work. *Independent*, v. 52, Nov. 22, 1900: 2773-2776.
 AP2.I53, v. 52
- Letters, Dec. 14, 15, 1900. *In U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on the Library.* Opening the Library of Congress on Sunday. Report. [Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1900] (56th Cong., 2d sess. Senate. Report 1761) p. 2-4.
 Z733.U576 1900a
- Submitted by Mr. Wetmore.
- To accompany an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. McMillan to the bill (H.R. 12291) making appropriations for the legislative, executive, and judicial expenses of the government for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1902.
- The Public library in the United States: Some recent phases and tendencies. *International monthly*, v. 3, Jan. 1901: 57-70.
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- [Address at the opening of the Newark (N.J.) Free Public Library, Mar. 14, 1901] 16 p. Typed.
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- On the scope and functions of the public library.
Excerpt. *Library journal*, v. 26, Mar. 1901: 135-136.
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- What the government does for the people: The Library of Congress. *Chicago record-herald*, May 25, 1901, 15; June 1, 15. SD

What may be done for libraries by the nation. *Library journal*, v. 26, Aug. 1901: C9-15. Z671.L7, v. 26

Address delivered at the A.L.A. conference, Waukesha, Wis., July 4, 1901.

——— Reprint. [n.p.] 7 p.

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Z671.L7, v. 26

Remarks at the A.L.A. conference, Waukesha, Wis., July 9, 1901.

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Statement made at the New York Library Association meeting, Lake Placid, Sept. 27, 1901.

The Book and the people. [n.p., n.d.] 45, a-[e] p. Typed. MSS

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MSS

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NCF

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AE5.E352, v. 30
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57-62. AP2.C92, v. 40
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C212-215. Z671.L7, v. 27
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- Appointments to the Library of Congress. Library journal, v. 27,
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- Herbert Putnam, chairman.
——— Library journal, v. 28, Apr. 1903: 172-174.
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2753-2756. port. AP2.I53, v. 54
- The Vicissitudes of books. 20 p. Typed. MSS
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AP2.C92, v. 42
- Address, at the eighty-second annual commencement of the Depart-
ments of Arts and Sciences, June 3, 1903, at the National Theater,
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- A[insworth] R[and] S[pofford] 1825-1908 [poem] *In* Columbia Historical Society, *Washington, D.C. Records*, v. 12; 1909. Washington. p. 182. F191.C72, v. 12
- Library journal, v. 33, Dec. 1908: 500. Z671.L7, v. 33
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- Statement, Jan. 5, 1910, and letter, Jan. 6, 1910. *In* U.S. Congress. House. Committee on the Library. Commission on national historical publications. [Hearing, 61st Cong., 2d sess., on H. R. 15428, to establish the Commission. Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1910] p. 16-20, 23-24. E172.U59
- Samuel W. McCall, chairman.
- Address [delivered at the dedication of the Carnegie Library, Howard University, Mar. 1910] *In* Howard University, *Washington, D.C. Library*. Addresses by President William Howard Taft [and others. Washington] Howard University Press [1910] (Howard University record, v. 4, Mar. 1910) p. 10-13. LC2851.H8c, v. 4
- The Commencement address [Clark College, Worcester, Mass., Oct. 1910] Clark College record, v. 5, Oct. 1910: 218-233. LD1026.8, v. 5
- U.S. Library of Congress. Legislative reference bureaus. Letter [April 6, 1911] from the Librarian of Congress transmitting special report relating to legislative reference bureaus. [Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1911] 36 p. (62d Cong., 1st sess. Senate. Document 7) Z733.U57S 1911
- Also included with statement of Feb. 4, 1913, before the Senate Committee on the Library. Z733.U57S 1913a
- *In* U.S. Library of Congress. Report of the Librarian of Congress. 1923. Washington. p. 183-237. Z663.A2 1923
- [Address on "The Cosmos Club today." 1912?] 7 p. Typed. OS
- "Dr. Putnam being introduced as President of the Club" at a dinner in honor of Dr. Gill, one of the founders of the Club.
- Address. *In* St. Louis. Public Library. Addresses and other proceedings at the opening exercises of the new Central Library building, January sixth, 1912. St. Louis [Shelly Print] 1912. p. 3-12. Z733.S14B2

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 Statements, Feb. 26, 27, 1912. In U.S. Congress. House. Committee on the Library. Congressional reference bureau. Hearings on various bills proposing the establishment of a Congressional reference bureau. Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1912. p. 22-26, 110-114. Z733.U575 1912

James L. Slayden, chairman.

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Charter day address at the University of California, Mar. 23, 1912.

——— Reprint. [n.p., n.d.] 27 p. OS

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Z671.L7, v. 37

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——— Reprint. [n.p., n.d.] 15 p. OS

——— Library journal, v. 37, Dec. 1912: 651-658.

Z671.L7, v. 37

With title: The prospect; an address before a graduating class of women.

Address [at the welcoming session of the American Library Association conference at Ottawa, June 26, 1912] In American Library Association. Bulletin, v. 6, July 1912: 59-66. Z673.A5B8, v. 6

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——— Reprint. [n.p., n.d.] 7 p. OS

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Presented at the Ottawa conference.

Address [at the dedication of the Doe Library building] University of California chronicle, v. 14, July 1912: 353-356. LD739, v. 14

——— In California. University. Library. Dedication of the library, 1912. [Berkeley, 1912] p. 24-27. Z733.C153D

[To the Chancellor of the University of the State of New York, Oct. 17, 1912, on the dedication of the education building] 6 p. Holograph. in ink. MSS

In H.P. [scrapbook] 4.

U.S. *Library of Congress*. Archives of government offices outside of the city of Washington. Message from the President of the United States, transmitting report by the Librarian of Congress. Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1913. 219 p. (62d Cong., 3d sess. House. Document 1443) CD3029.A1A5

Referred to the Committee on the Library.

West Virginia, 1863-1913 [poem] In Callahan, James M. Semi-centennial history of West Virginia. [Charleston, W. Va.] Semi-Centennial Commission of West Virginia, 1913. p. 258-261. F241.C16

Statement, Feb. 4, 1913. In U.S. *Congress. Senate. Committee on the Library*. Legislative drafting bureau and reference division. Report. [To accompany S. 8337. Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1913] (62d Cong., 3d sess. Senate. Report 1271) p. 26-30. Z733.U575 1913a
Submitted by Mr. Root.

Includes Hearing of Feb. 4, 1913, before the Senate Committee on the Library, on Senate bills 8337 and 8335; with appendices (also Z733.U575 1913b): A. Letter [Apr. 6, 1911] from the Librarian of Congress transmitting special report relative to legislative reference bureaus. (Also issued separately: Z733.U575S 1911.)—B. Hearings before the Committee on the Library of the House of Representatives, Feb. 26 and 27, 1912, relative to a "Congressional reference bureau." (Also issued separately: Z733.U575 1912.)

American libraries and the investigator. North American review, v. 197, Mar. 1913: 312-324. AP2.N7, v. 197

Excerpt. Library journal, v. 38, May 1913: 275-277.

Z671.L7, v. 38

The Admiral [poem] St. Nicholas, v. 40, Apr. 1913: 544.

AP201.S3, v. 40

Illustrated by Brenda Putnam.

[On a "public library," etc. Spring, 1913?] 47 p. Typed. OS

Appears to include the article that was published in *The Independent*, v. 55, Dec. 17, 1903: 2981-2984. AP2.I53, v. 55

The Planning of libraries; the substance of a lecture delivered before the School of Architecture. Architectural quarterly of Harvard University, v. 2, Sept. 1913: 15-28. NA1.A59, v. 2

[New York Library School, Nov. 24, 1913] 12 p. Typed. MSS

In *H.P. [scrapbook]* 4.

Statement, Dec. 17, 1913. In U.S. *Congress. House. Committee on Patents*. The Kahn bill. Hearing, 63d Cong., 2d sess. Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1913. p. 25-27. T223.S 1914d

William A. Oldfield, chairman.

Remarks at the banquet of the Authors' League, Feb. 14, 1914. 18 p. Typed. MSS

In *H.P. [scrapbook]* 4.

Letter, Mar. 20, 1914. In U.S. *Library of Congress*. Branch office of Library of Congress at San Francisco, Cal. Letter from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting a copy of a communication of

the Librarian of Congress, submitting an estimate of appropriation . . . relating to the establishment . . . of a branch office . . . [Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1914] (63d Cong., 2d sess. House. Document 856) p. [1]-2. Z642.U595

Referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

Greeting from the Librarian of Congress. [May 25, 1914] *In American Library Association. Bulletin*, v. 8, July 1914: 71-73.

Z673.A5B8, v. 8

Papers and proceedings of the A.L.A. conference, Washington, D.C., May 25-29, 1914.

The Library of Congress—and you. *Independent*, v. 82, May 10, 1915: 245. AP2.I53, v. 82

Typed copy (July 25, 1914? 4 p.) differs slightly. OS

“Per contra.” *In American Library Association. Bulletin*, v. 9, July 1915: 119-124. Z673.A5B, v. 9

Papers and proceedings of the A.L.A. conference, Berkeley, Calif., June 3-9, 1915.

— Library journal, v. 40, July 1915: 471-476. Z671.L7, v. 40
Legislative reference for Congress. *American political science review*, v. 9, Aug. 1915: 542-549. JA1.A6, v. 9

Are you a modern librarian? *Library occurrent*, v. 4, Jan. 1916: 89-90. Z732.I43, v. 4

[Remarks on French and Belgian reconstruction plans. June 28, 1916] *In American Library Association. Bulletin*, v. 10, July 1916: 392-394. Z673.A5B8, v. 10

Papers and proceedings of the A.L.A. conference, Asbury Park, N.J., June 26-July 1, 1916.

The Woman in the library. *Library journal*, v. 41, Dec. 1916: 879-881. Z671.L7, v. 41

Appreciation of Mary Wright Plummer.

[Libraries and the war] 13, 3 p. Typed. OS

“June 20, 1917, Louisville, Ky., A.L.A.” noted on p. 1.

Our libraries and the war; report of Preliminary War Library Committee. [June 22, 1917] *In American Library Association. Bulletin*, v. 11, July 1917: 315-321. Z673.A5B8, v. 11

Herbert Putnam, chairman.

Papers and proceedings of the A.L.A. conference, Louisville, Ky., June 21-27, 1917.

[Statement of Dr. Putnam offering his services to the War Service Committee. June 23, 1917] *In American Library Association. Bulletin*, v. 11, July 1917: 330. Z673.A5B8, v. 11

At the A.L.A. conference, Louisville.

A College library in war time; address at the dedication of the Converse Library building at Amherst College, November 8, 1917. *Library journal*, v. 43, Jan. 1918: 5-10. Z671.L7, v. 43

The Progress: and a coming appeal. *War library bulletin*, v. 1, Jan. 1918: 4. Z675.W2W25, v. 1

- Library war service; address [delivered before the] National Federation of Women's Clubs, May 7, 1918. 40 p. Typed. OS
 Part of this address appears in the Theodore W. Koch publication described in the following item.
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A Unique luncheon club in Library of Congress. *New York times*, May 18, 1930, VIII, 13: 5. port. SD

U.S. Congress. Congressional record: containing the proceedings and debates of the 55th Congress, 3d sess. + Dec. 5, 1898 + Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1899+ J11.R5

Includes scattered statements by, as well as about, Dr. Putnam. See Index to each session under Putnam, Herbert, and under Librarian of Congress.

U.S. Congress. House. Committee on the Library. Authorizing retirement annuities for certain librarians of Congress. Report. [To accompany H.R. 8136. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1937] 2 p. (75th Cong., 1st sess. House. Report 1445) Z733.U575 1937
Submitted by Mr. Keller.

Running title: Retirement annuities for librarians of Congress

—— Creating the office of Librarian Emeritus of the Library of Congress. Report. [To accompany H.R. 10846. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1938] 2 p. (75th Cong., 3d sess. House. Report 2661) Z733.U63E5

Submitted by Mr. Keller.

—— Retirement annuities for persons who serve as Librarian of Congress for 35 years. Report. [To accompany H.R. 7801. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1937] 1 p. (75th Cong., 1st sess. House. Report 1346) J66

Serial 10085

U. S. Library of Congress. Report of the Librarian of Congress. 1939+ Washington [U.S. Govt. Print. Off.] 1940+ annual. Z733.U57A
Z663.A2

Includes scattered references to Dr. Putnam; e.g., 1939, p. 1-5; 1940, p. 3-4, 21-22; 1945, p. 13, 19, 108, 146.

"Herbert Putnam, 1861-1955," a tribute, is included in the Report for 1955 (p. 1-3).

Well deserved honor conferred. *Libraries*, v. 34, Dec. 1929: 488.

Z671.L67, v. 34

Will receive honorary degree at New York University. New York times,
June 11, 1930, 18: 4. port. SD
Williamson, Charles C., *and* Oliver P. Newman. Herbert Putnam,
Librarian. Review of reviews, v, 79, Feb. 1929: 64-66. port.
AP2.R4, v. 79

Herbert Putnam

A Chronology

Note: This is primarily a personal and selective record; a summary view of his official course and public service is chronicled in the Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress for the fiscal years 1899-1939.

- 1861 (George) Herbert Putnam, sixth son and tenth child of George Palmer and Victorine Haven Putnam, is born in the home of his parents on East Seventeenth Street, New York, September 20.
- 1872 His father dies, December 20.
- 1879 Enters Harvard, having been prepared at the English and Classical School conducted by James H. Morse on New York's upper Broadway.
- 1881 Receives Harvard's Lee Prize for reading, and second-year honors for "the highest grade in the Classics," June 13.
- 1883 Graduates from Harvard *magna cum laude*; is admitted to Phi Beta Kappa Society.
- 1883-84 Attends lectures at Columbia Law School.
- 1884 Moves to Minnesota where he becomes librarian of the Minneapolis Athenaeum and continues his legal studies.
- 1885 Is admitted to the Minnesota bar.
- 1886 Marries Charlotte Elizabeth Munroe, daughter of the Rev. Charles and Susan Hall Munroe, of Cambridge, Mass., October 5.
- 1887 Becomes the first City Librarian of Minneapolis, the Athenaeum having combined with the new Public Library.
A daughter, Shirley, born at Minneapolis, June 29.
- 1889 Opens the Minneapolis Public Library building, December 16.
- 1890 A daughter, Brenda, born at Minneapolis, Minn., June 3.
- 1891 Resigns as City Librarian of Minneapolis and removes to Cambridge, Mass., in order to be near Mrs. Putnam's mother, who is ill, December 31.
- 1892 Is admitted to the Suffolk County (Mass.) bar.
- 1892-95 Practices law.
- 1893 Invited to become Librarian of Brown University, April 14.
- 1895 Becomes librarian of the Boston Public Library (at the age of 33), February 11.
Is made an honorary member of Boston's Tavern Club.

- 1896 Testifies as an expert witness before the Joint Committee of Congress on the Library concerning the needs of the Library of Congress and the qualifications of its Librarian.
- 1897 Attends the International Congress of Librarians at the Guild Hall, London, being one of three delegates accredited by the United States; the others are Justin Winsor and Melvil Dewey. Elected to the Società Bibliografia Italiana.
- 1898 President of the American Library Association (filling out the unexpired term of the late Justin Winsor).
Elected a member of the Old South Association, Boston, January 20.
Receives an honorary degree of Litt.D. from Bowdoin College.
- 1899 William McKinley authorizes William Coolidge Lane, president of the American Library Association, to offer him the Librarianship of Congress, February 4.
Tentatively accepts the appointment, February 6.
Formally accepts the appointment at 2:55 p.m., but half an hour later withdraws his acceptance because of political complications, February 8.
Receives a recess appointment as Librarian of Congress, March 13.
Ainsworth Rand Spofford to H.P.: "I am much pleased to learn that you can come down and confer with me soon. Let me ask you to come to my house No. 1621 Massachusetts Ave. as my guest, as I have plenty of room with my daughter as house-keeper and no other family." March 21.
Calls on the President, April 4.
Takes oath of office as Librarian of Congress; his 40-year administration begins, April 5.
Is elected a member of the Cosmos Club, Washington, May 8.
Delivers an address at the commencement exercises of the Johns Hopkins University, June 13.
The Senate confirms his appointment, December 12.
- 1900 Elected for a 5-year term to Council of the American Library Association.
Finds the Library of Congress "not yet equipped with the official records requisite for its safety, or with the catalogues and other paraphernalia which are necessary for its effective use," January 26.
Attends the Gutenberg 500th anniversary celebration, Mainz, and the Congrès Internationale de Bibliographie, Paris.
- 1901 Initiates interlibrary loan service.
Addresses annual conference of the American Library Association, Waukesha, Wis., July.
Persuades Theodore Roosevelt to allude to the activities of the Library of Congress in his annual message, October 15.
Divulges to a reporter of the *Evening Star*, Washington, D.C.,

- his plans for the forthcoming sale and distribution of printed catalog cards, October 15.
- 1902 Becomes an Overseer of Harvard for a 4-year term beginning in June.
Attends annual conference of the American Library Association at Magnolia, Mass., July.
- 1903 Nonresident lecturer at the Library School of the University of the State of New York, Albany.
Visits Mexico.
Member of the Administrative Board of the Congress of Arts and Sciences, Louisiana Purchase Exposition.
Attends annual conference of the American Library Association, Niagara Falls, June.
Receives an honorary degree of LL.D. from Columbian (now George Washington) University, June 3, and from the University of Illinois, June 10.
Travels, for a time, in Norway, Sweden, Russia, Germany, and the Netherlands.
Invited to make an address at dedication of new library building, Rutgers University, on November 10.
- 1904 President of the American Library Association.
Reports on condition of the Bowdoin College Library.
As a member of the Committee on the Harvard Library, files a minority report "on the general policy to be pursued by a college library and especially by the Harvard Library as to the scope and extent of its collections," March 31.
Invited to deliver an address at dedication of library building, Pennsylvania State College, in April.
Receives an honorary degree of LL.D. from the University of Wisconsin, June 9.
Attends annual conference of the American Library Association St. Louis, Mo., October.
- 1905 Attends annual conference of the American Library Association, Portland, Oreg., July.
Attends meeting of the Overseers of Harvard University, December 13.
- 1905 Calls and presides over copyright conferences at Washington which lead to revisions of the law.
- 1906 Attends meeting of the Overseers of Harvard University, February 26.
Attends joint meeting of Pennsylvania and New Jersey library associations, Atlantic City, N. J., March 9-11.
Addresses the Drexel Institute Library School, Philadelphia, May 1.
Attends meeting of the Overseers of Harvard University, May 9.
In Boston in connection with the purchase of the Yudin collection, October 10.

H.P.: "Can you enlighten me as to the rumors in the papers about my taking your place in the Library? . . . It is a great honor to be bracketed with you,—you know I mean this,—but what a queer figure I should cut in the Library after a great specialist like you," May 31.

Addresses the Detroit Home and Day School, June 11.

Attends annual conference of the American Library Association, Bretton Woods, N. H., June 26–July 1.

1909–13 Member of the Coordination Committee of the American Library Association.

1910 Attends midwinter conference of the American Library Association, Chicago, January.

Delivers commencement address at Clark University, Worcester, Mass., June 15.

Purchases the sloop-rigged *Olga* from Margaret and Lorin Deland, June 17.

Attends funeral of James Lyman Whitney, who had succeeded him as librarian of the Boston Public Library, September 27.

1910–55 An elector of the Electoral College, the Hall of Fame, New York University.

1911 Member of the Special Committee on Conditions of Affiliation of the American Library Association.

Receives an honorary degree of LL.D. from Williams College.

Attends the exercises in connection with the inauguration of E. E. Brown as Chancellor of New York University, November 9.

Inspects the Pennsylvania Institution for the Blind, at Overbrook, December 12.

1912 Attends midwinter conference of the American Library Association, Chicago, January.

Attends dedicatory exercises at opening of new building for the St. Louis Public Library, where he is a guest of A. E. Bostwick, City Librarian, January 6.

In New York in connection with the Deinard Collection of Hebrew Literature, February 29.

Attends inauguration of John Grier Hibben, as President of Princeton University, May 11–12.

Attends annual conference of the American Library Association, Ottawa, June.

Appointed lecturer on architecture at Harvard for 1 year from September 1.

1912–13 Chairman of the International Relations Committee of the American Library Association, of which he had been a member since 1907.

1913 From President Woodrow Wilson: "Thank you sincerely for your courtesy in personally attending to my modest wish for

- detective stories. I am sure those that you sent me will keep me going for some time." May 22.
- Visits Detroit in connection with Detroit Library Competition, June 2-5.
- Attends midwinter conference of the American Library Association, Chicago, December.
- 1914 Membre de la Société des Amis de la Bibliothèque Nationale et des Grandes Bibliothèques de France.
- Addresses Authors' League in New York, February 14.
- Named by the Executive Board of the American Library Association an official delegate to the meetings of the Library Association (Great Britain) to be held at Oxford.
- 1916 Elected a centurion of the Century Association, New York.
- Attends midwinter conference of the American Library Association, Chicago, December.
- 1917 Presents, as chairman, the report of the Preliminary War Library Committee, at the second general session of the annual conference of the American Library Association, Louisville, Ky., June 22.
- 1917-19 General Director of the American Library Association War Service, devoted to supplying reading matter to American troops preparing for, or engaged in, the war.
- 1918 Inspects library at Camp Dix, N. J., February 26.
- Inspects libraries at Camp Cody, New Mexico, and Camp Travis, Texas, in early May.
- Addresses General Federation of Women's Clubs, Hot Springs, Ark., May 7.
- In connection with the War Service of the American Library Association, visits Camp Devens, June 7.
- Attends annual conference of the American Library Association, Saratoga Springs, N. Y., June.
- In a message "to the loyal staff of the Library of Congress" declares: "It is our country as a whole which is at war; it is our government *as a whole* which is its agent. And it needs to bring to bear in the conflict every one of the elements, every one of the forces, which makes for its efficiency. *Every* establishment of the government has therefore a part to play, a duty to perform. And the efficiency of the whole will be conditioned on the contributory efficiency of each. The Library is one. It has its part to play—an indispensable one. Its efficiency *must* be maintained. And you who, resisting temptations elsewhere, are aiding to maintain it, can as justly say that you are doing war work as any of those who leave it for a bureau with a military title. . . . To thank you for it would seem to imply that it is loyalty merely to me or to the Library, whereas it is the higher loyalty to a cause and a principle. But I want you to know how clearly I realize it,

how deeply I value it, and how sure I am that in the end, and upon the final reckoning, it will secure the recognition that it deserves." July 25.

On business of American Library Association's War Service, sails for Europe on board the *Adriatic*, December 16.

- 1919 Awarded the Distinguished Service Medal "for especially meritorious and conspicuous service as General Director of the American Library Association, Library War Service."

Attends midwinter meeting of the American Library Association, Chicago, December.

- 1920 Attends midwinter conference of the American Library Association, Chicago, January.

Attends meeting of the Carnegie Corporation's Committee on Study of Training for Library Work, New York, April 29.

- 1921 The Committee on Nomination of Overseers of Harvard College and Directors of the Alumni Association has unanimously voted to place his name on postal ballot of nomination to the Board of Overseers, February 28.

In New York on business of restoring Library of the University of Louvain, May 2-6.

As guest of President E. A. Alderman, attends exercises connected with the one hundredth anniversary of the founding of the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, May 31-June 2.

Attends annual conference of American Library Association, Swampscott, Mass., June.

Attends laying of cornerstone of the American Academy of Arts and Letters building, New York, November.

- 1922 Attends meeting of the Carnegie Corporation, New York, February 4.

- 1923 Elected to the Honorary Committee of the Gutenberg-Gesellschaft, Mainz, July.

- 1924 He will write later that down to this year "the problems of administration included many conventional in any large library of the research type; the aim in the development was obvious. It was, without ignoring the intensive duty to Congress itself and to the other government establishments: (1) to enlarge the collections to a degree and diversity truly comprehensive; (2) to develop an apparatus for the use of them quickly responsive; (3) to widen the service so as to embrace with it the general public of serious investigators; and (4) in whatever ways might be practicable, to render at least the by-products of our operations serviceable to other libraries (of whatever type) in effecting economies in their own administration."

In New York, attends meeting of the Committee on the American Library at Paris, January.

- Speaks at a concert of chamber music at the Freer Gallery, presented by Mrs. Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, under the joint auspices of the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institution, February 7.
- Places the engrossed Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States in "a sort of shrine" which Congress has provided as a "safe, permanent repository," in the rotunda gallery of the Library of Congress, February 28.
- Attends musical festival, presented by Mrs. Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, Pittsfield, Mass., September.
- 1925 Elected to membership in the National Institute of Arts and Letters.
- By a Joint Resolution of Congress, on his recommendation, accepts the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation, an endowment for chamber music, approved January 23.
- With the passage and approval (March 3) of the Library of Congress Trust Fund Board Act, he contemplates "a huge importation of source material of concern to the investigator, and the [enhancement of the] personnel by the accession to our staff . . . of numerous specialists in the various fields of knowledge."
- Ex officio, acts as secretary at the first meeting of the Library of Congress Trust Fund Board, April 11.
- Opens the Coolidge Auditorium in the Library's northwest courtyard, October 28.
- Addresses students at Pratt Institute Library School, November.
- From James Benjamin Wilbur receives gift for the acquisition, in photocopy, of source material for American history, August 14.
- 1925-26 Again chairman of the International Relations Committee of the American Library Association.
- 1926 Attends meeting of the American National Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations, New York, January 5.
- Receives the Richard Rogers Bowker endowment to be applied to bibliographic services.
- Elected an honorary member of the Czech Society of Librarians and their Friends, Prague, "in recognition of his scholarly merits in librarianship and his work for the intellectual rapprochement of nations in the field of culture," October 3.
- As an honorary president, presides at the third general session of the American Library Association, fiftieth anniversary conference, Atlantic City, October 5.
- 1927 Announces the completion of the northeast bookstack in March. Secures from William Evarts Benjamin, of New York, the endowment of a "chair of American history," April.

Reports that the Carnegie Corporation has endowed a chair of the fine arts, April.

Sails on the *Paris* (French Line), for Europe where he will join Mrs. Putnam in Florence, May.

Announces two gifts from John D. Rockefeller, Jr.: \$450,000 for the acquisition (in copies and facsimiles) of source materials for American history, and \$225,000 for the development of the bibliographic apparatus, i.e., the National Union Catalog; work begins September 1.

Views on censorship of public libraries as communicated to president of American Library Association: "In the case of History—which isn't an exact science—it [i.e. the public] has a right to expect there a representation of all serious views decently expressed. To provide it is the essence of the service of a public library in a free community. And to eject from a public library a sincere book, by a reputable author, on the ground that its views are erroneous, is to tyrannize over public opinion. Our American public wouldn't stand for it. Applied generally and carried to an extreme, it would leave our libraries the expression of nothing but the prejudices which happen to be in authority at the moment. With the Democrats in authority it would bar books supporting the Republicans, with Catholics in authority it would bar the literature of Protestantism, with free trade in authority it would bar the literature of protection, with the empiricists in authority it would bar the literature of dogma, with an anarchist temporarily in authority it would eject the literature of law and order. The emasculated collection would represent nothing but the whim, the passion, or the self-interest temporarily in control, and be wiped out by the whim, the passion, or the self-interest that succeeds it." October 26.

Accepts from Archer M. Huntington an endowment for the purchase of books relating to Spanish, Portuguese, and South American arts, crafts, literature, and history, November 14.

Decorated Knight of the Royal Order of the Pole Star, Sweden, December 20.

1928 Announces the Library's cooperation with the Vatican Library in the introduction of American techniques.

Receives an honorary degree of LL.D. from Harvard University.

Receives from Archer M. Huntington an endowment of \$50,000 to provide an honorarium for a consultant in Hispanic literature, April 25.

His wife, Charlotte Elizabeth Munroe Putnam, dies, October 26.

1929 His thirtieth anniversary as Librarian of Congress is recognized by a "surprise" assemblage in his honor and the presentation of a festschrift, *Essays Offered to Herbert Putnam*, April 5.

- Attends the International Library and Bibliographical Congress, Rome.
- Receives the (Theodore) Roosevelt Distinguished Service Medal.
- Announces an endowment from the Beethoven Association of New York for "the aid and advancement of musical research."
- Receives an endowment of \$140,000 from the Daniel Guggenheim Fund for the Promotion of Aeronautics, which provides for a chair of aeronautics and the acquisition of material, October 29.
- Elected a life member of the National Geographic Society, December 18.
- 1930 Receives an honorary degree of LL.D. from New York University.
- At his long urging an act (H.R. 8372, approved June 13) authorizes the construction of an annex, at a total cost of \$6,500,000.
- The purchase of 3,000 incunabula from Otto H. F. Vollbehr for \$1,500,000 is authorized and appropriated (H.R. 12696 and H.R. 12902), in acts approved July 3; H.P. has declined to have the collection named for him.
- Sails for Southampton on board the *Leviathan*, itinerary calling for visits to London, Paris, Geneva, Venice, and Vienna, July 12.
- On board the *Leviathan*, at Cherbourg, accepts personal custody of the St. Blasius-St. Paul copy of the Gutenberg Bible on vellum and escorts it to the United States, where it is placed in the Library of Congress on September 3.
- Elected a Corresponding Member of the Hispanic Society of America. November 12.
- 1931 A act is approved authorizing an appropriation of \$100,000 per annum "to provide books for the adult blind," March 4.
- Delivers an address at dedication of the Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University, April 11.
- Elected a Corresponding Member of the Massachusetts Historical Society, October 8.
- Accepts the James Benjamin Wilbur bequest to endow a chair of geography, October 21.
- 1933 His position sustained by the Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia in the case, *Treadwell v. Putnam*, a suit brought by the heirs of Emma Treadwell (Mrs. John Boyd) Thacher to recover certain materials bequeathed by her to the Library of Congress. The decision is handed down on May 15.
- Elected a member of the Hispanic Society of America, November 15.
- Elected an honorary member of the Grolier Club, New York.
- Receives an honorary degree of Litt.D. from Princeton University, June 20.

- 1935-36 Receives from Mrs. Gertrude Clarke Whittall (Mrs. Matthew John Whittall) a collection of Stradivari instruments and Tourte bows, and an endowment for their use.
- 1936 Accepts the Archer M. Huntington endowment of a chair of poetry, December 6.
- 1937 Elected to the American Philosophical Society, April 23.
Elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters, November 12.
- 1938 Announces the gift of the Hispanic Foundation in the Library of Congress, presented in behalf of the Hispanic Society of America, by Mr. Archer M. Huntington. The Hispanic Room is designed by Paul Cret.
- Writes to President Franklin D. Roosevelt: "I shall be prepared 'on or after July 1,' to turn over the administrative duties to my successor as Librarian, and to facilitate his entrance upon them," June 15.
- An act is approved providing "that upon separation from the service, by resignation or otherwise, on or after July 1, after the approval of this Act, Herbert Putnam, the present Librarian of Congress . . . shall become Librarian Emeritus, with such duties as the President of the United States may prescribe, and the President of the United States shall thereupon appoint his successor, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. The said Herbert Putnam shall receive as Librarian Emeritus compensation at the rate of \$5,000 per annum." June 20.
- James Truslow Adams to H.P.: "I need not say what I have always thought of the magnificent work which you have done with such wide and democratic vision, because I have already said it in print many times. I do not know of any portion of my *Epic of America* which has been more widely quoted than the section in which I spoke of you and the Library, and as that book has sold 200,000 copies in America and been translated into seven languages, you can see that my little bouquet has been scattered rather far and wide." August 15.
- Declines, in a letter to Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, of Doubleday, Doran & Co., to write an autobiography: "I have kept no records; and I am not given to reminiscence, my habitual concern having been always of today or tomorrow rather than of yesterdays." November 18.
- 1939 Receives "an address in appreciation of his services to scholarship and to the advancement of knowledge, presented on behalf of the scholars of the United States, by the American Council of Learned Societies." January 27.
- The Honorable Lawrence Lewis of Colorado pays him a tribute in the United States House of Representatives, February 17.

Informally opens to the public the Whittall Pavilion adjoining the Coolidge Auditorium, March 6.

Writes to President Roosevelt: "Under the appended act and my immediate assurances to you, my retirement to the office of Librarian Emeritus and the nomination of my successor as Librarian might have taken place on any date since last July. Your delay in proceeding under it has been a compliment which I have appreciated, as would any executive. On April fifth, however, I shall have completed forty years of my service here. If by then you are prepared to name my successor, my retirement and his nomination as of that date would seem especially appropriate and welcome." March 27.

President Roosevelt replies: "I need not tell you that I have been glad to have you continue in such fine spirit in the office of Librarian. And I can understand your wish to become Librarian Emeritus after your historic forty years of service on April 5th. However, I cannot fill your place on that date—principally because it is such an extremely difficult place to fill. Therefore, I must leave it to your good judgment either to stay on for a month or two or to retire and let your first assistant carry on until such time as I can find your successor. I know you will understand." March 28.

President Roosevelt sends regrets: "I wish it were possible for me to be with my friends of the 'Round Table' on April fifth. But I expect to be away from Washington at that time. . . . The completion of two score years of service in making the Library of Congress serve the needs of the American people is an event of outstanding importance. . . . I have an unshaken conviction that democracy can never be undermined if we maintain our library resources and a national intelligence capable of utilizing them." March 28.

Fortieth anniversary of his service as Librarian of Congress observed by a luncheon in his honor, given by his associates of the Librarian's Round Table (established by him shortly after he assumed his duties), by the unveiling of his portrait in bronze, wrought by his daughter, Brenda Putnam, and by the opening of the Annex. April 5.

Felix Frankfurter, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, writes: "From the viewpoint of ultimate contribution to the enduring values of civilization, I know of no public servant who has contributed more during these last forty years than you have." April 5.

The Joseph W. Lippincott award "for outstanding professional achievement in the field of librarianship" goes to "Herbert Putnam, Librarian, Scholar, Educator, who, among librarians of America, has been a pioneer, an innovator, a conservator who, a scholar by instinct and lifelong application has gener-

- ously promoted the research of others and who, an educator in the broadest sense, has always sought most general cultivation of the arts and sciences to effect wider dissemination and surer preservation of the printed word." June.
- Calls on Archibald MacLeish at Conway, Mass., July.
- The *New York Herald-Tribune* publishes an editorial: "A Great Librarian Carries On," July 21.
- Receives an honorary degree of Litt.D. from the Catholic University of America, November 13.
- Wilhelm Munthe, Director of the University Library, Oslo, refers to him in a book, *American Librarianship from a European Angle* (Chicago, American Library Association, 1939, p. 95): "To me the Library of Congress is like a giant orchestra, in which each member is a virtuoso or a specialist on his own peculiar instrument. In front of them stands that little musical enchanter who directs without the help of a baton—and under his spell they produce the world's most remarkable library symphony." July 26.
- Becomes Librarian of Congress Emeritus, October 1.
- 1940 Honorary membership in the American Library Association conferred at the annual conference, Cincinnati: "Herbert Putnam is recognized and acknowledged by us all as the dean of our profession, for forty years the distinguished head of the Library of Congress, and now, by special act of the Congress of the United States, its librarian emeritus. . . . With rare skill, tact, and wisdom, Dr. Putnam has, over a period of two-score years, developed the Library of Congress from an establishment of only governmental significance to its present proud position as the world's largest bibliographical institution. Through its features of nation-wide helpfulness, for which he, more than any other individual, is responsible, it has become truly our national library. . . . This Association honors itself in conferring upon our distinguished colleague the highest honor it has in its power to bestow." May 27.
- 1941 The American Library Association formally accepts the Herbert Putnam Honor Fund and agrees to administer it with the purpose "to do lasting honor to Dr. Putnam, to inspire future generations of librarians to emulate the qualities and accomplishments which have distinguished his professional career, and to make possible some useful activity or service appropriate to his achievements and ideals."
- 1943 A photograph of his bust, as executed by Brenda Putnam, is one of three pictures placed in the reading room of Chicago's John Crerar Library, the others being Michelson for science and Edison for technology; H.P. represented library service. May 26.

- 1945 Attends a conference at the Library of Congress on card distribution and pays tribute to the service of Charles Harris Hastings, December 10.
- 1949 Fiftieth anniversary of taking office as Librarian of Congress celebrated with a luncheon held in his honor, in the Library's Whittall Pavilion, followed by a staff meeting in the Coolidge Auditorium and a special concert by the Budapest Quartet, April 5.
- 1950 Speaks and receives a standing ovation at banquet tendered in behalf of the American Library Association to the Library of Congress upon its sesquicentennial, the Mayflower Hotel, Washington, December 12.
- 1954 Tells a *Washington Post and Times-Herald* reporter who interviews him on the fifty-fifth anniversary of his becoming Librarian of Congress that "at 92, he still gets up at 6 a.m., prepares his own breakfast, takes a trolley to Capitol Hill, maintains regular office hours, handles his mail, receives numerous visitors and is available for consultation," April 5. [Those breakfasts consist of cereal, two strips of bacon, and coffee.]
- 1955 While vacationing on Cape Cod, trips on the street and breaks his hip; bone set at the Hyannis Hospital, Monday, August 1. Sufficiently recovered to be moved to a "rest house" on a hill near Falmouth, August 13.
Dies of a coronary thrombosis at Woods Hole, Sunday, August 14; the time: 9:30 p.m.
Body cremated at Forest Hills Cemetery, Jamaica Plain, Mass., Wednesday, August 17.

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